

BURTON CREEK STATE PARK GENERAL PLAN FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Reponses to Comments

Volume 2 of 2



State Clearinghouse # 2005052059

**Approved by the State Park and Recreation Commission November 18,
2005**

**California Department of Parks and Recreation
Sierra District
2005**



Volume 2

This is Volume 2 of 2 of the Final General Plan for Burton Creek State Park. It contains the Comments and Responses (comments received during the public comment period review of the General Plan and California State Parks (CSP) response to those comments); and the Notice of Determination (as filed with the State Office of Planning and Research), documenting the completion of the CEQA compliance requirements for this project. **Volume 1** of the Final General Plan for Burton Creek State Park contains the Executive Summary; the Summary of Existing Conditions; Goals and Guidelines for park development and use; Environmental Analysis (in compliance with Article 9 and Article 11 Section 15166 of the California Environmental Quality Act); Maps and Appendices relating to the General Plan. Together, these two volumes constitute the Final General Plan for Burton Creek State Park.

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If you would like more information about the general planning process used by the Department or have questions about specific general plans, contact:

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INTRODUCTION

On June 15, 2005, the California Department of Parks and Recreation (Department) released to the general public and public agencies the Preliminary General Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Report for Burton Creek State Park. The proposed General Plan will guide future management direction at the park. It contains a comprehensive and integrated set of park-wide goals and guidelines for the long-term management of the Park that focus on protection of environmental resources, enhancements to visitor use and opportunities, and improvements to administration and operations of the park. In addition, the General Plan includes proposed plan elements, park development and operations, and designates appropriate land uses.

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that is included in the Preliminary General Plan contains the environmental analysis of potentially significant effects of the proposed project. Together, the Draft EIR and this response to comments document constitute the Final Environmental Report for the project.

In accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21091 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15087, a 45-day public review period for the Draft EIR was provided. The public was advised of the availability of the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR through public notices, a mailing notice to over two hundred and fifty individuals, and notification on the Department's web site. The Public Notice (Notice of Availability) was posted with the Placer County Clerk. Copies of the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR were also available for review at the following locations: Tahoe City Public Library, Sierra District Office at Sugar Pine Point State Park, Tahoma, CA, the Northern Service Center in Sacramento, and on the Department web site. Copies of the documents were also available upon request to the Sierra District Office in hard copy and CD format.

The public review period ended July 31, 2005. During the public review period, comments on the Plan and environmental analysis were received from one public agency (California Department of Transportation), one Native American Tribe (Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California), private groups, and individuals. The vast majority of individual comments were submitted via email. The Department also received a petition signed by approximately 300 individuals and submitted anonymously. The exact number of signatories is unknown due to some individuals signing several times. Also included as comments, are the comments received during the public meeting convened on July 7, 2005, specifically for the purpose of letting the public comment on the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR.

The majority of comments were objections to the proposed development of a campground in the park.

All comments on the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR and the responses thereto, are presented in this document, which is organized as follows:

The Introduction provides a brief overview of the proposed project, describes the requirements under CEQA for responding to public comments received on the Draft EIR, and describes the organization of the Final EIR.

The next section is a List of Commenters which is a list of all people and entities that submitted comments.

The next section provides the Responses to Comments including a copy of the comment letter and the responses to it, for every comment received during the public comment period on the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR.

The final section provides a reproduction of portions of the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR with revisions to text and graphics made in response to comments.

LIST OF COMMENTERS

This chapter provides a list of all public comments received on the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR during the public review period, which ended on July 31, 2005. Listed first are agency and/or organizations who submitted comments, followed by individuals who submitted comments.

Agencies and Organizations

Jeffrey Pulverman, Chief, Office of Transportation Planning and Mass Transportation – Caltrans

Marie Barry, Environmental Director, Environmental Protection Department, Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California

Ron Treabess, Director, Community Partnerships and Planning, North Tahoe Resort Association

Duane L. Whitelaw, Fire Chief, North Tahoe Fire Protection District

Individuals

Jeffrey D. Harris

Richard Van Fossen

Julia Kingery

Lynne Larson

Juli Anderson

Arthur Penniman

Marylyn and Peter Siewert

Jon Weedn

Robin Machette

Mike Niles

Ingrid Backstrom

Jeffrey Rieger

Alain and Stacy Bordes

Paul Vatistas

Kris Kingery

Carol Pollock

Michael Ramicone

Elizabeth Dugan

Sue and Gregg Henrikson

Mike Schwartz

Doug Greenwood

Dewey and Lynda Paul

Laurie Gregory

Nancy Wells

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Banfield

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Banfield

Nurpu

Dave Shelton
Jim Zellers
Greg and Mary Rankin
Anne Greenwood
John Hearst
Ray Garland
Hugo Kenyon
Joann Russell
Emily Headley
Roger Huff
Mike Hawkins
Tom Carter and Carol Mazerall
Benita Luke

Also received and recorded as part of the public comment are those comments received at the July 7th public meeting held at the North Lake Tahoe High School

Finally, a petition was anonymously submitted during the comment period.

A note to the commenters - We wish to sincerely thank every individual that commented on the Preliminary Plan. Really! Each one of you took the time to become involved and active in a planning process with direct and indirect effects to an area you care for. For that you are to be commended. Despite differences in opinion with some commenters, the Department has listened to you, making several changes to the three draft renditions of the general plan along the way. We believe the current Preliminary General Plan strikes a balance between the needs of the local community and the mandates governing the Department in providing statewide outdoor recreation.

For brevity, throughout the responses to comments, we refer to the Burton Creek State Park Preliminary General Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Report as the Preliminary Plan. The California Department of Parks and Recreation is referred to as the Department. Burton Creek State Park is sometimes referred to as BCSP.

Also for brevity, readers will note that we refer commenters to responses in earlier letters received for similar issues. We apologize if this appears somewhat impersonal. However, where the issue or concern was the same, there was no reason (or way) to create a unique response to each person bringing up the same concern.

Response to Letter 1 from the California Department of Transportation

- 1.10 The Department thanks you for the Department of Transportation's participation and comments on the Burton Creek State Park Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR.
- 1.11 The Department does not believe conducting a traffic analysis at this time is a prudent use of resources. A traffic analysis should be conducted at the time of the proposed development. At that time that current conditions can be analyzed and critiqued against the exact facility development proposed.
- 1.12 We concur. The text on page 81 referring to the unavoidable significant impact has been revised to read as follows:

Impact
Potentially significant unless mitigated

- 1.13 Thank you for the correction. From other interactions between our respective departments, we were under the impression Caltrans had a specific goal to improve traffic flows in Tahoe City. Regardless of Caltrans future traffic flow goals in Tahoe City, the Department will integrate all possible mitigation actions, such as constructing the park access points to State Highway standards, to attempt to mitigate traffic impacts below a significant level. The following paragraph, located on page 7, will be revised to read as follows:

Second, the proposed campground development will take into consideration traffic on Highway 28, by referencing the Caltrans traffic index of Levels of Service (LOS) for Tahoe City. The index, that rates traffic flow on a scale of A-F, currently rates Tahoe City traffic near the bottom of the scale as an E, due to traffic congestion at times. Caltrans, has determined that due to regulatory restrictions defined by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA), they are unable to implement potential measures to improve the index and that it will eventually be downgraded to an F. The Department is committed to work with Caltrans, TRPA and other agencies to implement reasonable and feasible mitigation for the proposed development in this plan to lessen impacts to traffic as much as possible.

Page 28 – 29 will be changed as follows:

Another impact on facility development in BCSP, is ~~the ongoing problem of~~ traffic congestion in Tahoe City and in the Lake Tahoe area in general. During most of July and August, holidays, and winter weekends, traffic backs up on Highways 28 and 89 leading into Tahoe City. Delays can

range from minutes to an hour, with the back up sometimes measured in miles.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) ~~has an established~~ utilizes a system describing traffic quantities on two-lane highways. Called "Levels of Service for Two-Lane Highways", the system rates highway traffic ~~alphanumeric system~~ based on quantity of traffic and speed limit (see below).

Traffic on Two-Lane Highways: Level of Service Definitions

LOS A – Free Flowing Conditions.

LOS B – Speeds at or near free-flow speed, but presence of other users begins to be noticeable.

LOS C – Speeds at or near free-flow speed, but freedom to maneuver is noticeably restricted.

LOS D – Conditions where speeds begin to decline slightly with increasing flow;

LOS E – Operating conditions at or near roadway capacity. Even minor Freedom to maneuver more restricted. disruptions to the traffic stream can cause delay.

LOS F – Breakdown in vehicle flow. Queues form quickly behind point in the roadway where the arrival flow rate temporarily exceeds the departure rate.

Highway traffic around Tahoe City is currently ranked as an ~~F— heavily congested traffic~~ E by Caltrans- Operating conditions at or near roadway capacity. Demand exceeds capacity and speeds vary greatly— considerable delays. The Caltrans projects the future LOS for Highway 28 in the Tahoe City area to downgrade to an F. (Draft State Route 28 Transportation Concept Report).

"The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) is the responsible agency within the Tahoe Basin for transportation issues, and takes the lead role in identifying transportation strategies and projects. As a result, in order to preserve the unique character of the Basin, typically, TRPA does not pursue additional roadway capacity. Since Caltrans is not the responsible agency for programming capacity increasing projects in the Basin, they cannot guarantee that the overall facility will operate at any level of service better than LOS F. Therefore, the future concept for SR 28 will remain LOS F."goal for highway traffic around Tahoe City is to achieve a ranking of D. This would allow for a speed of about 40 miles per hour (except right in town), with some traffic flow becoming unstable. Speeds are subject to sudden change and passing is difficult.

~~In order to meet this goal, Tahoe City traffic issues are currently being addressed through a new taskforce headed by Caltrans. Several alternatives to alleviate or lessen the traffic are being explored including construction of another bridge across the Truckee River, and bypasses around the town. Implementation is planned in the next five years.~~

Many of the recreation facilities proposed in this general plan are viewed by local residents as potential negative contributors to the existing traffic flow in Tahoe City. The Department's intent is to ~~plan for facilities that will allow for a Level of Service ranking D or better.~~ work closely with Caltrans and other state, federal and local agencies to implement reasonable and feasible measures to mitigate or reduce significant traffic impacts.

This may be achieved by implementing the improvements developed through the Caltrans Tahoe City traffic working group combined with other mitigations such as retiring of an existing campground in Lake Forest currently managed by the Department of Fish and Game, designing the facilities to encourage walking and biking, and working with other agencies to evaluate opportunities for a trolley service from the campground to nearby points of interest. Also, the size of the proposed campground has been reduced from 300 sites and two large group sites, to a campground of a range of 4.25 - 200 sites, and one group site for 50 people.

Page 32, paragraph 6 will be changed to read as follows:

There are two traffic issues related to the proposed campground development in the Preliminary Plan. One is where the primary access road into the park is located and connects with Highway 28. The other issue is in regards to increased traffic from the proposed facilities and traffic flow.

The original focus of much opposition regarding the access road location was its location near Dollar Hill. The Department listened to the community and moved the proposed access road location from the Dollar Hill area to the currently proposed location at Tamarack Road. The Department will still need to work closely with Caltrans to incorporate properly designed ingress/egress engineered features on Highway 28 where the access road will connect. In order to develop this access, the current natural preserve boundary will require adjustment. This will require a separate resolution for the Park and Recreation Commission to approve.

In regards to increased traffic and traffic flows California State Parks is committed to work with Caltrans, TRPA and other agencies to implement all feasible and reasonable mitigation measures to reduce the traffic impacts of the proposed development in the Preliminary Plan.

~~A primary caveat to campground development will be traffic flows along Highway 28. Development of a campground at Burton Creek State Park will be considered with engineering measures taken in Tahoe City to improve the current traffic Level of Service, from a ranking of F to a level of D, as described in the Caltrans Level of Service traffic Ranking System. This may be achieved by expanding existing roads, adding new roads, building a bypass around Tahoe City or developing a second bridge down river from Fanny Bridge. The Department's intent is to plan for facilities that will allow for a level of service D or better.~~

Page 68, bullet 5 will be changed as follows:

- Plan for development of a campground in this planning zone. The actual size of the campground would be determined through analysis of use data and environmental analysis and constraints. Start the planning process by considering a facility to accommodate 4 25 - 200 campsites, a small number of cabins and yurts, and one group camp area for 50 people. Campground development would take into consideration traffic on Highway 28, with the intent of implementing feasible and reasonable measures to mitigate impacts of traffic flow and access on Highway 28.

Page 81, Unavoidable Significant Environmental Effects, Traffic, will be changed as follows:

Traffic

Threshold

Caltrans uses the Concept Level of Service (LOS) as the CEQA level of significance threshold when evaluating the impacts of local development plans and projects. A significant impact is identified if a specific local development plan or project results in a level of service on the highway segment or intersection that is below the Concept LOS, and must be mitigated.

Impact

Potentially significant unless mitigated

Discussion

Traffic in the Tahoe City area is sometimes congested during daylight hours during the summer and winter weekends. Caltrans currently ranks traffic flow as an F E — Considerable Delays Operating Conditions at or

near roadway capacity - on Highway 28, the worst rating in its Level of Service traffic flow rating system. In their Concept Transportation Report for Highway 28 (TCR, 2004) Caltrans has projected the LOS for Tahoe City will be downgraded in the future to a LOS of F - heavily congested traffic - in the future.

The report goes on to state:

"The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) is the responsible agency within the Tahoe Basin for transportation issues, and takes the lead role in identifying transportation strategies and projects. As a result, in order to preserve the unique character of the Basin, typically, TRPA does not pursue additional roadway capacity. Since Caltrans is not the responsible agency for programming capacity increasing projects in the Basin, we cannot guarantee that the overall facility will operate at any level of service better than LOS F. Therefore, our concept for SR 28 will remain LOS F."

Proposed campground development and day use facilities -in the General Plan may contribute to the traffic congestion. ~~It is the intent of the Department to meet the goal of Caltrans to achieve and maintain a traffic flow Level of Service D, with only minor delays in traffic. However, this goal may not be attained.~~

Mitigation

California State Parks is committed to work with Caltrans, TRPA and other state, federal and local agencies to implement all feasible and reasonable mitigation measures to reduce the traffic impacts of the proposed development in the Preliminary Plan.

~~Although some of the expected increases~~ in traffic from the campground development may be mitigated through various measures such as project design encouraging hike and bike trips to town, developing public transportation options, closing of the Forest Lake Campground (DFG operated), developing a trolley service from the campground to local points of interest, and limiting the size of the new campground. ~~, not all of the additional traffic may be mitigated to a level below significant. The proposed campground size will be analyzed to determine the size of campground that will maximize camping opportunity while addressing traffic impacts.~~

The impact ~~That~~ determination for the campground will be made when a traffic analysis is conducted as part of a facility development project specific CEQA document. ~~Therefore, an increase in traffic of a yet undetermined amount, must be considered at this time an unavoidable significant environmental effect.~~

Responsibility: The Department of Parks and Recreation
Staff Planners

Monitoring/Reporting Completion of Traffic Analysis as part of
a project specific CEQA analysis.

Unavoidable Significant Environmental Effects

Evaluation of the specificity of this first tier review indicates that all the ~~other~~ potential effects from projects proposed in this General Plan can be reduced to a less than significant level with appropriate facility location, the implementation of resource management programs, and the development of other specific mitigation measures.

Until the uses, locations, and scope of facilities or management plans are specified, the actual level of impact, whether individual or cumulative, cannot be determined. However, all future plans and projects are required to be in compliance with local, state, and federal permitting and regulatory requirements and subject to subsequent tier CEQA review and project specific mitigation.

- 1.14 The Department concurs subsequent environmental and traffic analyses will be needed to address park access issues when future development is proposed.
- 1.15 The Department concurs with Caltrans that subsequent environmental and traffic analyses will be needed when specific trailhead development is proposed.
- 1.16 The Department currently has no funding or timeframe for the proposed facility development discussed in the Preliminary Plan. Upon approval of the Preliminary Plan, when the Department is able to move forward with any of the facility development proposed in the plan, we will coordinate immediately with the SR 28 Project.
- 1.17 The Department concurs. The current Preliminary Plan recommends the development of a Vegetation Management Plan to develop a healthy forest, and a Road and Trail Plan to address erosion of current roads and trails. Drainage, storm water runoff discharge, erosion, and all other impacts associated with the proposed development will be analyzed through subsequent environmental documents when specific development is proposed.
- 1.18 We concur that excessive signage is not necessary to indicate the park's location to the public. Currently, no signs are found along the highway indicating the location of the park. We will work closely with Caltrans to

determine the appropriate number of signs that will be allowed along the highway.

- 1.19 See response to comment 1.13. We have modified references to the LOS.
- 1.20 The Department recognizes the uphill battle all involved parties will have in implementing solutions to improve traffic congestion in the Tahoe City area. However, we remain optimistic solutions exist and can be implemented to improve traffic flow in the town.
- 1.21 References to passing have been deleted.
- 1.22 We will keep Caltrans informed of all new reports and documents pertinent to Burton Creek State Park and Highway 28.

Response to Letter 2 from the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California

- 2.10 The Department thanks the Washoe Tribe for taking the time to comment on our Burton Creek State Park Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR.
- 2.11 The Department has met with tribal leaders to discuss the proposed plan, as required by the Department's Native American Consultation Policy and Senate Bill 18, Chapter 905, Statutes of 2004, and will continue to consult with appropriate members, such as the Washoe Archival Coordinator, when any proposed development comes to fruition or whenever the Washoe Tribe proposes we meet. For this project we met personally with Lynda Shoshone of the Cultural Committee, and sent letters to William Dancing Feather, Cultural Resources Coordinator, and Brian Wallace, Chairperson, advising them of the project.
- 2.12 The Department completed a Resource Inventory for Burton Creek State Park (BCSP1978 – 1994). We are sending you a copy.
- 2.13 A secondary access route through the state park had been requested by some members of the community in the past to lessen traffic in their neighborhoods and to provide secondary emergency evacuation routes out of the neighborhoods in the event of a forest fire in the area. The Department's position on the access route through the park was the proposed road was not compatible with the State Park mission, and other routes (exiting north of the Highlands Subdivision) and safe zones (high school ball fields) are available in the event of a fire.
- 2.14 The Preliminary Plan discusses a range of campground sizes. We plan to analyze the impacts of a campground incrementally until the maximum 200 site campground and 50 person group camp is analyzed. We particularly want to analyze the impacts additional traffic will have on Highway 28. In this way we can propose and construct a campground that addresses impacts while maximizes camping opportunity.
- 2.15 We concur. Once a General Plan is approved for the park, specific development plans and proposals are made. The Department then conducts timely surveys for resources utilizing the existing Resource Inventory and other available resource information, to determine the impacts the proposed development will have on the natural and cultural resources. This will occur when any type of development generally described in the Preliminary Plan is proposed for implementation. For additional information, please see the discussion under "Carrying Capacity and Park-Wide Goals and Guidelines for Managing Visitor Impacts" in the Preliminary Plan.

- 2.16 The road proposed for access into the park currently exists through the preserve. However, the Department is recommending an adjustment to the preserve boundary for several reasons. In order to improve the road for public access, it should be realigned slightly, widened and paved. Paving the road, and putting in proper drainage structures, will also eliminate the erosion currently taking place on the road. Realignment of the road will also allow the Department to move it away from adjacent landowners to lessen visitor/ private property interactions. Finally, the proposed boundary adjustment will allow for administrative buildings to be constructed on high capability lands adjacent to the highway.

In considering this boundary adjustment, the Department has placed protection of the resources at the forefront. The preserve was established to protect Burton Creek and the surrounding riparian area. The area being proposed for removal from the preserve is not in the riparian area nor is it near the creek. It is an upland forest area similar to the rest of the park. It actually slopes away from the creek so any runoff from the area does not enter Burton Creek. We encourage a field trip inspection of the area proposed for removal from the preserve to verify these findings.

- 2.17 The Department respects the position taken by many of the local residents who do not want to see any changes made in the park, especially the development of overnight camping facilities, because they believe it will impact the scenic and natural values of the area and caused negative impacts to wetlands, meadows and riparian areas.

The Department strongly endorses the plan because it will, in many ways, improve environmental conditions in the park. As described in the Preliminary Plan, a Road and Trail Management Plan will be developed and implemented. This plan, when implemented, will restore some eroding roads trails to natural landscape while re-engineering others to eliminate current erosion problems. Some roads and trails, currently located in meadows and riparian areas will be removed. No new roads or trails will be proposed in meadows or riparian areas. The plan will also address the needs of the various user groups to construct or improve existing connector trails to surrounding U.S. Forest Service lands.

The Department's mission is to protect resources and provide recreation. We believe the plan provides a greater level of protection of resources than currently exists in the park, and will provide a larger spectrum of recreational opportunities to all Californians, including the local residents.

No facilities are proposed in or near riparian areas, meadows or stream courses so there would not be additional impacts to these resources. The proposed campground is approximately .5 miles from the any residential area.

In terms of degrading scenic and natural resources the total build out of all the facilities will affect less than 10 percent of the park or two hundred acres. If the Tahoe Conservancy parcel (Dollar parcel) is added in then the park will be about 3,000 acres, meaning only 7 percent of the total land base will be impacted in any way from the proposed development.

In response to the comment that the proposed developments would affect Lake Tahoe's water quality, the proposed Preliminary Plan will lead to improvements to roads and trails in the park, decreasing sediment sources to the lake. In particular, the entrance road currently accessing the park has serious design flaws leading to sediment eroding directly into Burton Creek (then Lake Tahoe). The road would be improved under the plan eliminating this erosion. Also, redundant roads and trails in the park would be eliminated, also decreasing erosion of sediment from the park. Finally, all the proposed developments would be designed in high capability areas, with all required Best Management Practices (BMPs) to capture all project produced sediments. The proposed location for the campground is far from all stream courses and wetlands, on flat ground, on a very large flat bench.

In addition to a greater level of resource protection described above for controlling sediment and erosion, development of the park will result in greater State Park ranger presence in the park. The park will not be developed unless it is staffed with appropriate levels of rangers, ecologists and maintenance workers. Local residents are concerned about illegal activities taking place in the park, such as motorcycle riding. Such activities can cause erosion and are a fire hazard. In parks where there is a ranger presence, these activities are quickly stopped. Development of the park will be coupled with an increase in staffing, allowing the Department to hire rangers to patrol and protect the park's resources and stop illegal activities.

Finally, concerns have been expressed by some about a campground increasing fire danger. Campground development will bring fire hydrants to the middle of the park where water is currently not available for fire suppression, increasing fire suppression capabilities. Regular patrols will be in the park to spot fires sooner. DPR is not aware a wildfire has ever been attributed to a state park campground.

Also, more fuels reduction work has taken place in Burton Creek State Park in the last five years than any other Tahoe Basin state park. Shaded fuel breaks have been constructed next to most of the adjacent subdivisions, and extensive forest thinning and fuel reduction has occurred in the area of the proposed campground. For these reasons the Department does not believe fire hazard will be an issue with the proposed development in the Preliminary Plan.

- 2.18 The Department recognizes that pile burning can cause alteration of soil structure and mortality of the natural seed bank. It can also lead to alien weed invasion. However, we view it as a necessary step in the overall program of restoring health to forest stands. We strongly disagree that we could scatter slash on the forest floor as an alternative.

We have completed many forest management projects in BCSP over the last twenty years. Our forester characterizes the stands as overgrown, decadent, and heavily overburdened with fuels. Our current prescription for treatment is to thin the stands, removing dead trees and live trees to reduce the stocking. Then we pile the slash and down dead material and burn it during the winter. Finally, only after the fuel loads have been greatly reduced, do we broadcast burn. If we eliminated the pile burn phase, fuel loads would be so great that the entire stand would burn up when we broadcast prescribe burned. In addition, local and regional regulatory agencies such as the North Tahoe Fire District and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency do not permit scattering of slash as an alternative to pile burning.

- 2.19 We use the terms broadcast burning and prescribed burning interchangeably. We concur that chipping has problems including decreasing the pH of the soil and smoldering when burned. We only chip in areas where we do not plan to burn, where we haul the chips away, or where we wish to inhibit future understory growth.

- 2.20 Our most recent experience with burning in meadows is that it promotes the invasion of exotic species. The burning of the meadows in the past took place at a time when few exotic species were present to invade meadows following burning. Our current method of treating conifer encroachment in meadows is removal of the trees when they are seedlings and saplings using hand crews.

- 2.21 Thank you for the references on fire chronologies. Page 46, under Goal will be changed as follows:

Maintain a fire management program based on vegetation management priorities, [scientific fire chronology studies](#), historical information, monitoring data, and other park management goals.

- 2.22 The Department has monitored the Northern Goshawk activity in BCSP for many years. The species is mentioned in page 42 under Special Animals.

- 2.23 We agree all development should be outside of riparian and meadow areas. The area proposed for administration buildings is on a flat, dry, mixed conifer site at least 500 feet from a riparian or meadow area.

- 2.24 We agree the forest stands in BCSP should be protected. We have an active program to treat stands in the park to promote healthy forests for future generations.
- 2.25 The Department will work with the Washoe Tribe to have a monitor on site during any construction of the proposed facility development.
- 2.26 The Department looks forward to working with the Washoe Tribe as we move forward in this planning effort.

Response to Letter 3 from the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association

- 3.10 Locally, the Sierra District of California State Parks has enjoyed a long and cooperative relationship with the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association. Statewide, the Department has worked with resort associations and the business communities in efforts to promote and protect parks while creating a successful business climate for nearby businesses. The economic benefits of State Parks to local communities have been clearly demonstrated in many studies.
- 3.11 When we develop and submit plans and environmental documents for a trailhead development across from the Tahoe State Recreation Area (TSRA), we will consider facilities to accommodate dissemination of visitor information for the Tahoe Basin and local businesses.
- 3.12 As we move forward with the development of a trailhead across from the TSRA campground, we will consider the needs of parking for businesses in Tahoe City in so far as it fits with the mission of California State Parks.
- 3.13 The Department strongly agrees with the concept of a trolley service from the proposed campground and trailheads to other central locations. On page 29, Constraints on Facility Development, the paragraph has been amended to read as follows:

This may be achieved by implementing the improvements developed through the Caltrans Tahoe City traffic working group combined with other mitigations such as retiring of an existing campground in Lake Forest currently managed by the Department of Fish and Game, designing the facilities to encourage walking and biking, and working with other agencies to implement a trolley service from the campground to nearby points of interest. Also, the size of the proposed campground has been reduced from 300 sites and two large group sites, to a campground of a range of 425 - 200 sites, and one group site for 50 people.

On page 51, Park Wide Goals and Guidelines for Circulation, a bullet has been added to read as follows:

- The concept of a trolley service can be explored with other local entities to shuttle people from the proposed campground and trailheads to central locations such as Tahoe City.

Also, see Response 1.13 for more information on traffic.

- 3.14 The Department looks forward to reviewing the way finding signage program once it is developed and exploring the possibility of integrating it with the Department's signing standards for State Parks.

Response to Letter 4 from Julia Kingery

- 4.10 The Department appreciates the concern you express regarding traffic. However, we do not believe the development of relatively minor trailhead amenities such as parking for 8-12 vehicles, directional interpretive panels, trash cans and restroom will add significantly to the traffic in the area. We concur with your recommendation to include the trolley and bus system in our planning and have added language to the document in several sections supporting the concept of integrating our campground and trailhead proposals with bus stops and a trolley service where appropriate (see Response 3.13). A shuttle between the campground and Tahoe City would reduce traffic impacts from the proposed facility.
- 4.11 Staffing permitting, California State Parks supports all types of interpretive opportunities including guided hikes and talks covering a range of topics including forest and fire management, first aid, and the hazards of animals (and people).
- 4.12 Language has been added to page 54 of the Preliminary Plan under Park Wide Goals and Guidelines for Recreation discussing alternative forms of camping including walk-in tent sites. The added language states; "Explore alternative camping facilities such as walk-in tent sites to provide different camping experiences, and as a new potential source of revenue generation".
- 4.13 The Department is open to concession proposals for education and the other topics you mention such as painting outdoors and other concession opportunities that may be presented.
- 4.14 Please see Response 2.17 regarding impacts from campground development. Also, the Preliminary Plan allows for overnight facility development while preserving a green belt between all the subdivisions surrounding the park. The proposed location of the campground is roughly in the middle of the park, placing it nearly a mile away from any subdivision and school. There will be no loss of privacy for local residents. In regards to public safety, the park, if developed, will have a greater ranger patrol presence leading to less, not more violations, such as the motorcycle trespass currently taking place in the park.

In addition, less than 10 percent of the 2000 acre park is proposed for development. That would leave 1800 acres undeveloped, providing more than ample open green space for all the surrounding subdivisions and local residents.

The Department disagrees that the proximity of a campground to a subdivision or town translates into higher crime and other problems. A local example of this is at Sugar Pine Point State Park where a 175 unit

campground is within 100 feet of Tahoma, a long established west shore community. The campground and community have existed side by side for over thirty years. Since State Park rangers are peace officers that occasionally assist in back up for county sheriff units, law enforcement presence has actually increased in Tahoma since the campground was built. We are not aware of any studies or statistics indicating crime increases in adjacent neighborhoods when a campground is built. If such information is available, we would appreciate a copy be sent to the Department.

In regards to the observation that development of the park will lead to increased fire danger, although more people may be present in the park, so will park personnel. Ranger patrols with fire pump capabilities will be available for fire response. Fire hydrants will be installed making year round water available for fire fighting (currently not available). Currently there are no ranger patrols in the park. A campground will only be developed if more staffing is available to serve the public and protect resources.

Also, in the last five years the Department has spent considerable funds and crew time conducting fuel reduction work in Burton Creek State Park (more than any other California State Park in the Tahoe Basin). Nearly the entire east and south sides of the park have had shaded fuel breaks constructed along the boundaries, and many acres of forest stands in the interior of the park have been treated by mechanical and prescribe fire methods.

Additionally, a visit to any of the campgrounds in the Tahoe Basin will illustrate how little forest litter and wood is actually available for burning in the campgrounds and immediate surroundings. People collect the wood to burn in there contained camp fires leaving little to nothing on the ground to start a fire.

Finally, the Sierra District operates three other parks in the Tahoe Basin that have campgrounds – Sugar Pine Point, DL Bliss and Emerald Bay State Parks. There is no record of a fire starting in these parks that ever left the park, nor are we aware of any statistics supporting the premise fire occurrence is higher in developed state parks than any other areas in the Tahoe Basin.

In regards to endangering bears and other wildlife, State Parks has a strong program educating the public about bears, other wildlife, and camp food. We encourage people to go to Sugar Pine Point State Park and observe our program that includes bear proof food storage lockers, a diverse public education program, and enforcement program that occasionally results in citations for food left out. Tahoma's only complaint regarding the program, is that State Parks has done such a good job

public education and enforcement that the bears now spend their time in Tahoma, because some residents are not as disciplined as our campers in storing food and disposing of garbage.

- 4.15 We agree that visitor environmental education is critical to protecting resources and stimulating thought. We will continue to provide (and expand) these services as funding and staffing permits.

Response to Letter 5 from Jeffery D. Harris

- 5.10 The Department believes the Burton Creek State Park Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR (Preliminary Plan) adequately addresses the impacts of the proposed project as required by CEQA for a first-tier Environmental Impact Report as defined in Section 15166 of the CEQA Guidelines.
- 5.11 Please refer to responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.13, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic issues. . In summary it is our intent to implement all reasonable and feasible mitigation measures for traffic. Since it may not be possible for all the proposed developments, we have included a recommendation that a Statement of Overriding Consideration be included in the final general plan document. Also, since development of the park may be many years away, the Department has determined that it will be more productive, accurate, and economical to conduct a baseline traffic analysis at the time the development is actually proposed for implementation.
- 5.12 Please refer to the discussion in the Environmental Analysis Section – Tiered CEQA Analysis. Based on our interpretation of CEQA, the Preliminary Plan and Draft EIR contain the level of specificity necessary for analysis of a general plan. Subsequent project specific proposals will require more detailed environmental analysis of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts. This detailed analysis will include current and potential projects and the potential impacts to Air Quality, Public Health, Biological Resources, Noise and Vibration, Soil and Water Resources, Visual Resources and Waste Management.
- 5.13 We sympathize with your observations regarding traffic. Our intent is to mitigate the significant impacts of our proposed development on traffic. The Department will continue to work with Caltrans and other agencies to explore solutions to improving traffic flow in the Tahoe City area.

Response to Letter 6 from Lynne R. Larson

- 6.10 The Department's intent is to implement all possible mitigation measures to reduce significant traffic impacts. However, we recognize that some of the traffic impacts may still not be below a level of significance. Consequently, the Department will prepare a statement of overriding considerations regarding traffic impacts. This statement will discuss the benefits of providing public services such as affordable overnight facilities and quality outdoor recreation that outweigh the impacts of additional traffic in the Tahoe City area. Also, see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 for more responses to the traffic issues.
- 6.11 The Department's interpretation regarding irreversible changes is that any of the proposed facility development may be removed and the area restored to its previous condition over time.
- 6.12 Please see Responses 2.17 and 4.14 regarding issues about the proposed development including loss of privacy, increased noise levels, increased fire risk and the perception that criminal activities will increase.
- 6.13 The Preliminary Plan proposes a variety of camping experiences from a walk-in tent campground to a traditional campground.
- 6.14 Developed trails will be available for use by visitors and residents of the local community.
- 6.15 The Sierra District is currently repairing and restoring some trails in the park. In addition, the Preliminary Plan proposes the development of a Road and Trail Plan. That plan will lead to the development a trail system throughout the park that includes connectors to surrounding U.S. Forest Service lands and closure of some roads and trails that may be causing environmental degradation.
- 6.16 The suggestion of a visitor center for the north shore is a great idea that the Department supports. We will gladly participate with other agencies in its development as staffing and funding permit.
- 6.17 We concur with this recommendation. The parking areas for the trailheads are currently planned to be relatively small, and we have added language to the Preliminary Plan to tie the bus and trolley system into the proposed campground and trailhead locations (see Response 3.13).
- 6.18 The Department firmly believes the park is big enough for many forms of recreation including car access to trailheads and a campground. Less than 10 percent of the park is proposed for development. Only the roads to the trailheads and campground would be open to motorized vehicles. About 1800 acres would be left undeveloped and would be accessible

only by foot, bike or horse. The main access road will be upgraded with sediment capture structures and paved, leading to a substantial reduction in current erosion levels on the road. There will still be plenty of room in the park for people to find and enjoy peace and quiet. Approximately 90 percent of the park will remain undeveloped. None of the current trails will be closed due to the proposed campground development.

- 6.19 Local businesses would have the opportunity to present concession ideas and compete for concession offerings. Often, local businesses approach State Parks about concession opportunities. Also, there may be some concession opportunities, such as teaching outdoor skills, mountain biking or outdoor painting, that are not appropriate for downtown. The Department supports exploration of concession opportunities in California State Parks. Concession opportunities will only be proposed for visitor needs not currently addressed in the adjacent business community. The intent of the Department's Concession program is not to directly compete with local business.
- 6.20 The draft plan was presented to the public in 2002. After public comment, the plan was submitted to the State Park Executive Staff in Sacramento for comment and review. The Executive Staff strongly objected to a State Park General Plan for a 2000 acre park, such as BCSP, that did not include an overnight camping facility. The draft plan failed to respond to the statewide demand for camping in a park clearly large enough to accommodate a variety of recreation experiences, from day use to over night camping. Members of the State Park and Recreation Commission, the commission responsible for adopting the plan, expressed similar views. The planning process was then delayed for a year and a half due to a lack of planning staff. We have just recently been able to resume the planning process with the submittal to the public of a new Preliminary Plan. The State Park and Recreation Commission did not adopt a previous version of the Preliminary Plan.

The current Preliminary Plan has been developed in clear response to the public comments we have received, balanced with the mission of the Department. The Preliminary Plan will explore the possibility of a campground ranging in size from 25-200 sites and a group camp for 50 people. This is a substantial reduction in the size of the originally proposed campground of 300 sites. The entrance and access road has been moved 1.5 miles to the west of the Highlands, in a direct response to opposition expressed over the previously proposed access road location.

- 6.21 The Department believes the proposed Preliminary Plan provides a good balance between protecting natural and cultural resources and providing opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation.

Response to letter 7 from Juli Anderson

- 7.10 Please see Responses 2.17 and 4.14 in response to fire danger at Burton Creek State Park and other issues regarding campground development. In regards to adding campers and additional vehicles into the park please see Response 6.18.
- 7.11 Water for domestic use associated with the proposed development would come from municipal wells and other water sources operated by the Tahoe City Public Utility District. It would not come from surface waters in the park. None of the proposed development would be near riparian, stream or meadow habitat areas. The proposed location for the campground is approximately 1.5 miles from Antone Meadows wetlands and would be located lower in the watershed. The campground will have no impact on the meadow complex or to tributaries that feed into Star Harbor.
- 7.12 Accommodations are at a premium in the Tahoe Basin during the summer months. State park facilities are filled months in advance. The average cost of hotel rooms or cabins on the north shore for a family exceed one hundred dollars nightly. Camping provides an affordable overnight stay alternative to the high priced accommodations currently available in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The same discussion could be applied to the area restaurants. For a percentage of California's population, camping is an affordable way to enjoy the beautiful Lake Tahoe Area. As economic studies have demonstrated, these same campers will greatly contribute to local businesses in Tahoe City, stimulating what is currently a stagnant economic climate with some businesses actually closing down in town.
- 7.13 In regards to the traffic issues please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 9.11, and 17.0. In addition, when the proposed campground development is ready to move forward, there will be an extensive traffic analysis conducted. This analysis will incrementally measure the impact of constructing a very small 25 unit traditional campground, on up to the maximum size campground (200 sites) described in the Preliminary Plan. This will allow planners to assess the impacts of the proposed facilities at various sizes allowing the decision makers to select the campground that provides the most camping opportunities with the least amount of traffic impacts.

Some proposed mitigation measures for traffic impacts include; designing facilities that link with existing mass transit systems like TART, working with other agencies to close the existing campground at Star Harbor and restoring that area to wetlands, working with other entities to provide a trolley service between the park and Tahoe City, and designing the park's facilities to link with road and trail systems in the park connecting with the

regional systems to encourage people to travel by foot and bike to local destinations.

7.14 Please see Response 6.18 regarding seeking peace and quiet in the park.

Response to Letter 8 from Arthur B. Penniman

- 8.10 All of the activities listed in your letter will continue to be available to you and other user groups. Only 10 percent of the park would be affected by the proposed development. The benefit of providing affordable overnight camping in the Tahoe Basin should not be discounted. In statewide surveys the public demand for camping has been steadily increasing supporting the notion the public supports the cost of constructing recreation facilities in California State Parks such as those proposed in the Preliminary Plan.

Response to Letter 9 from Marylyn and Peter Siewert

- 9.10 Please see Response 6.18 regarding the proposed development of the park.
- 9.11 The park and campground will not be accessed through the Highlands or any other neighborhood. The currently proposed main access into the park is about 1.5 miles west of the Highlands adjacent to the Tamarack Lodge.
- 9.12 See Response 9.11 regarding the access route.
- 9.13 Please see Response 6.18 regarding open space. In reference to the “giant trailer park”, the Preliminary Plan proposes to analyze a campground ranging in size from 25-200 sites. The Department will analyze the possibilities of constructing a small traditional car campground, and incrementally investigate the impacts of building a larger facility until the maximum 200 site facility is analyzed. This will allow us to explore the concept of “everything in moderation” as mentioned in your comments.

Response to Letter 10, submitted by email by Fire Chief Duane Whitelaw, of the North Tahoe Fire Protection District

- 10.0 The Department agrees with the North Tahoe Fire Protection District (NTFPD) of the importance of maintaining appropriate access roads, helicopter landing sites etc. within the park for emergency responses. As part of the development of the Road and Trail Plan the Sierra District will work closely with the NTFPD to ensure emergency access is designed into the road and trail system.
- 10.1 Within the scope of the Department's mission the Sierra District will work with the NTFPD and other entities to explore development of a secondary access route to the Highlands. Currently, such a route may be possible exiting north of the North Tahoe High School, traversing east across the Dollar property, then south through the Firestone property along the eastern boundary of the Highlands. We also believe an adequate fire safe zone currently exists at the high school ball fields.

Response to Letter 11, submitted via email by Jon Weedn

- 11.0 Please see Responses 2.17, 4.14 and 6.18 regarding the proposed park development. See Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic issues.

Response to Letter 12, submitted via email by Robin Machette

- 12.0 Please see Responses 2.17 and 4.14 regarding campground development issues including fire hazards.
- 12.1 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic impacts.
- 12.2 Please see Response 9.11 regarding park access.
- 12.3 Please see Responses 4.14 and 6.18 regarding proximity of the proposed development to adjacent communities.
- 12.4 The proposed plan calls for signage and the development of at least four trailheads with limited facilities, such as proposed in your letter.
- 12.5 The current regulations for dogs in Burton Creek State Park would remain the same whether or not the park is developed. Dogs are only allowed in the park on leash, and only on paved roads and trails. When the park is developed, there will be a greater ranger presence in the park leading to more strict enforcement of current regulations.
- 12.6 Please see Response 6.20 regarding the overall planning process for the Burton Creek State Park General Plan.

Response to Letter 13 submitted via email from Mike Niles

- 13.0 Many of the California State Park campgrounds in the Lake Tahoe area are filled to capacity during most of the camping season. Campgrounds are closed during the winter except a few sites at Sugar Pine Point State Park. The proposed campground for Burton Creek State Park would be closed during the winter. California State Parks does not manage property in Lake Forest large enough to accommodate a campground,
- 13.1 The Preliminary Plan calls for signing the trail system to provide visitor information and orientation.
- 13.2 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic impacts from the proposed campground development.
- 13.3 The only development proposed in the Preliminary Plan on the Conservancy property is a trailhead. Almost the entire parcel will be kept as open space and preserved as is or restored and improved when eroding roads and trails are rehabilitated. The California Tahoe Conservancy and California State Parks view the Dollar Property as a logical extension of Burton Creek State Park with the road and trail system already closely linked. It will streamline management in the area to have only one agency manage both parcels.
- 13.4 The Department often provides housing for employees, especially in areas where housing is cost prohibitive for state employees. We do have camp hosts who stay in travel trailers in the campgrounds, but permanent resident employees are not housed in the campgrounds. Housing employees within park boundaries allows for a quick response from rangers and maintenance employees during emergencies and provides 24 hour staff presence in the park.
- 13.5 Please see Response 6.19 regarding concessions.

Response to Letter 14 submitted via email from Ingrid Backstrom

14.0 Please see Response 6.18 regarding hiking trails.

14.1 Please see Responses 7.12 and 8.10 regarding the cost benefits of the proposed campground.

Response to Letter 15 submitted via email by Jeffrey Rieger

- 15.0 The lands around the Fiberboard Freeway are managed by the U.S. Forest Service. The campground across the street from the Tahoe State Recreation Area was closed because the Department is over coverage requirements as defined by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency for that park.
- 15.1 The Department is aware of the high level of use on the trails in Burton Creek State Park during all times of the year. That is why it is important to implement the proposed general plan for the area. The plan proposes trail improvements, signage, and environmental projects to decrease erosion on the roads and trails in the park.

Response to Letter 16, submitted via email by Alain and Stacy Bordes

- 16.0 Please see Response 9.11 regarding the proposed access route to the park.
- 16.1 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic impacts from the proposed project.
- 16.2 Please see Responses 2.17 and 4.14 regarding issues about the proposed campground development.
- 16.3 The Preliminary Plan proposes improvements in the signage in the park to assist visitors in directions. Also, please see Response 6.18 regarding passive recreation in the park.
- 16.4 Every State Park offers different opportunities for recreation and resource protection. The proposed plan addresses these sometimes competing goals by providing recreation facilities on less than 10 percent of the park land, leaving the remainder for those who desire little or change in the park.

Response to Letter 17, submitted via email from Paul Vatistas

- 17.0 A letter submitted as part of this planning process by Jeffrey Pulverman, Chief, Office of Transportation Planning and Mass Transportation, California Department of Transportation, indicated that State Parks was mistaken in reporting the Level of Service (LOS) traffic goals. He states the current LOS is an E in the Tahoe City area on Highway 28, and its future projection is an F. We had incorrectly reported from information we had received that the current LOS was an F and the goal was to improve traffic flows to a Level D. Caltrans states in their Transportation Concept Report for Highway 28 that TRPA is responsible for addressing traffic capacity issues in the Tahoe Basin and therefore their future projection for the traffic LOS on Highway 28 will remain an F.

However, it is our intent to implement all feasible and reasonable mitigation measures for traffic impacts. Please see Responses .12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, and 9.11 for additional responses to traffic impacts. Also, should Caltrans revise its goal to improve traffic flows in Tahoe City; the Department will actively participate to help achieve those goals.

- 17.1 The proposed access road will come directly off Highway 28 near the Tamarack Lodge.
- 17.2 Operation facilities are proposed near the highway next to the proposed access road.
- 17.3 See Response 17.0
- 17.4 The vast majority of current use in BCSP is from adjacent neighborhoods. Many visitors also use the park. Proportionally, their numbers are few. The Preliminary Plan calls for improved signage for all users.
- 17.5 It is stated on the second paragraph on page 27 of the Preliminary General Plan that the majority of indicators for all of the TRPA thresholds are out of compliance.
- 17.6 The Department is unaware of a survey taken in 2001/2 that verifies the observation made by the commenter that the majority of users at the park are visitors from around the state rather than home owners (or renters) in subdivisions adjacent to Burton Creek State Park. It is possible the commenter is referring to comments received at a public workshop held during the first planning process for the first draft of the general plan. At that workshop, people listed their primary residence addresses since that is where they would be sent information about the general plan planning process in the future. The Department would classify these people, who

have a primary residence outside of the basin, and a secondary home in the basin as local users of the park, not as visitors.

The distinction between these people and visitors is that visitors come to the area and camp in parks, stay in hotels, or simply come for the day. It is logical to assume that the vast majority of these visitors would not attend a public meeting during their vacation regardless of how they felt about the proposed plan. It is the perception of the State Park personnel at the meeting that the majority of people at the meeting have primary or secondary residences (or rent homes) in the Lake Tahoe area. Therefore, the difference between whether local residents or visitors use the park more may simply be a matter of semantics and definitions.

A formal survey was conducted during the Memorial Day Weekend of 2005 at various park units around the Tahoe Basin. Additional surveys were conducted at specific locations in California and Nevada during the following two weeks. Visitors and stakeholders were surveyed at Tahoe State Recreation Area, Sugar Pine Point SP, and Emerald Bay SP. Park visitors were also surveyed at Leo Carillo State Park in Malibu. Stakeholders were surveyed in Reno and Las Vegas, Nevada. They were also surveyed in Bakersfield, California.

The data revealed that the most important priority for individuals who responded to the survey was; "I would like to see family campsites included in this park". The least important priority was; "I do not want any development of park facilities on this land".

It should be noted that the second most important priority was the need to establish recreational trails in the park.

- 17.7 Please see Response 6.20 regarding the overall planning process for the Burton Creek State Park General Plan.
- 17.8 Alternatives 1 and 2 discussed in the draft EIR beginning on page 83 of the Preliminary General Plan discuss alternatives for development with no campgrounds.
- 17.9 Increased traffic may be an unavoidable impact of the proposed plan.
- 17.10 See Response 17.8 regarding a discussion of other alternatives.

Response to Letter 18 submitted via email by Kris Kingery

- 18.0 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic issues.
- 18.1 Please see Responses 2.17 and 4.14 regarding the potential impacts from the proposed campground.
- 18.2 The Department appreciates the vision of the commenter. You are well ahead of the norms, laws and regulations governing use and enjoyment of the beauty that is Lake Tahoe. Perhaps some day the only way to access the basin will be through guided tours.

Response to Letter 19 submitted via email by Carol Pollock

19.0 Please see the responses to letter 12.

Response to Letter 20 submitted via email by Michael Ramicone

- 20.0 Thank you for your observations and support for the proposed project. The suggestions you make for improving the proposed facilities will be considered in any future development plans including sediment capture structures, installing proper drainage, showers and flush toilets (if there is enough water), bear proof food lockers, a waste dump facility etc. When we actually propose development of the facilities we will work closely with all agencies including the county.
- 20.1 The entrance to the park is proposed to be at the Tamarack Lodge location.
- 20.2 Please see Responses 2.17, 4.14 and 13.3 regarding potential impacts of the campground and the proposed location.

Response to Letter 21 submitted via email by Elizabeth Dugan

- 21.0 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic impacts. Please see Responses 2.17 and 4.14 regarding issues surrounding the campground development.

Response to Letter 22 submitted via email by Sue and Gregg Henrikson

- 22.0 The Department concurs with your three recommendations to remove the potential administrative building site, alternate road location, and alternate campground location from the CTC property shown on the maps in the Preliminary Plan. The final plan will show these changes on the maps.

Response to Letter 23 submitted via email by Mike Schwartz

- 23.0 The Department supports mountain bike use in areas where it is appropriate and we can effectively manage this activity to minimize soil erosion and environmental impacts. Trail problems often originate from poor trail design and overuse.
- 23.1 Please see Response 6.20 in regards to the overall planning process for the park that has taken place so far.
- 23.2 The Department would like to clarify that extensive road and trail work has occurred in the past to rehabilitate some eroding sections. Also, roads and trails have been relocated outside of riparian and meadow areas to protect resources. Road and trail projects such as these can still take place in the future. The Preliminary Plan recommends the completion of a Road and Trail Plan. This plan would look at the entire area in terms of trail use, trail signage, trail connectivity, resource problems associated with trail use etc. However, minor trail work to fix resource damage may still occur regardless of whether a general plan is approved for the park or a campground is built.
- 23.3 Please see Response 7.12 regarding camping demand in the Tahoe Basin and Response 6.18 regarding how the proposed campground will impact the existing trail system in the park.
- 23.4 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic issues.
- 23.5 The proposed location for the campground is approximately .5 to 1.5 miles from any surrounding neighborhood or school.
- 23.6 Suggestions 1-3 may be considered in the Road and Trail Plan proposed to be developed in the future. Traditionally, general plans do not provide this level of detail.
- 23.7 Please see Response 6.18 regarding upgrades to the proposed access road. Also, see Response 23.6 regarding level of detail in general plans.
- 23.8 Motorized traffic is proposed to be prohibited on all roads except on the access road to the campground and the trailhead access roads, similar to Sugar Pine Point State Park.
- 23.9 Please see Response 6.19 regarding concessions in State Parks.

Response to Letter 24 submitted via email by Doug Greenwood

- 24.0 The alternative access road will be removed from the maps in the Final Plan.
- 24.1 Under the proposed Preliminary Plan the preserves will remain intact as well as the Tahoe XC Nordic Center Trail System.
- 24.2 The proposed Preliminary Plan calls for the development of a Road and Trail Plan. That plan will identify those roads to be converted to single track. We encourage your participation in that planning process.
- 24.3 The alternative campground locations identified on the maps in the Preliminary Plan will be removed from the maps.

Response to Letter 25 submitted via email by Dewey and Lynda Paul

- 25.0 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic issues and the Preliminary Plan. Please see Response 7.12 regarding camping demand in the Tahoe Basin. Please see Responses 2.17 and 4.14 regarding issues surrounding the proposed campground development, and Response 6.18 regarding how much open space will remain following development of the park.

Response to Letter 26 submitted via email by Laurie Gregory

- 26.0 Please see Response 6.20 regarding the overall planning process that has taken place so far for the Burton Creek State Park General Plan.
- 26.1 Please see Response 6.18 regarding how much open space will remain following development of the park and how the development will be compatible with the parks existing recreation resources.

Response to Letter 27 submitted via email by Nancy Wells

- 27.0 Please see Responses 2.17, 4.14 and 23.5 regarding issues about the proposed campground development.
- 27.1 Only one road is proposed for paving - the proposed access road into the park. This road currently erodes sediment directly into Burton Creek. By redesigning the road, paving, and installing sediment traps we will greatly reduce the sediment currently generated. The area is not a designated wilderness. It is classified as a State Park. The proposed facility development in the Preliminary Plan is permitted under such a classification. Also, see response 6.18 regarding open space and the proposed development.
- 27.2 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic and the Preliminary Plan.
- 27.3 The Department appreciates your concern for "our paradise" as you refer to it in the comment letter. However, Burton Creek State Park belongs to all of the people of California. The park is large enough to accommodate local resident as well as visitors that come to enjoy this wonderful spot. Please see Response 6.18

Response to Letter 28, submitted via email by the Banfields

28.0 Please see Responses 2.17 and 4.14 regarding issues about campground development and fires, and Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic impacts from the proposed development.

Response to Letter 29, submitted via email by "nurpu"

29.0 Comment noted.

Response to Letter 30, submitted via email by Dave Shelton

- 30.0 The Department concurs with your recommendation to provide appropriate screening between any of the proposed development in the Preliminary Plan and existing development. The proposed campground is at least half a mile from any existing development and all the trailheads can be located in areas where screening can be achieved, except the proposed Tahoe City trailhead, which is already in a developed area.

Response to Letter 31 submitted via email by Jim Zellers

- 31.0 Burton Creek State Park belongs to all of the people of California. In regards to funding, the people of California have passed many bonds in support of the Department's efforts to provide the finest state park system in the country to include providing parks with visitor use facilities. We believe the proposed development in the Preliminary Plan will make the park more accessible to all of the people of California including those who may possess disabilities.
- 31.1 Comment noted. The Department follows contract procedures according to state regulations.
- 31.2 The Department suggests you contact the U.S. Forest Service regarding their management of national forest lands.
- 31.3 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic issues. See Response 3.13 regarding the idea of a trolley system developed in cooperation with other agencies.
- 31.4 The Preliminary Plan proposes improvements to the park that will benefit a wide variety of park visitors including the local residents. Development of the park will provide staff on site to enforce public safety and resource protection regulations. There will be infrastructure improvements to the road and trail system, resulting in better circulation (trail connectors to USFS trails and Tahoe City) and less erosion of the road and trail surfaces. There will be nearby camping for visiting friends and relatives for those living in the Tahoe City area. There will be an economic boost to Tahoe City businesses. There will be reduced fire hazard because fire hydrants and year round water will be available to certain locations around the park. Also the response time to emergencies will be quicker with park staff living and working in the park. These are just a few of the many benefits that could occur with implementation of the proposed plan.

Response to Letter 32 submitted via email by Greg and Mary Margaret Rankin

- 32 The proposed campground in the Preliminary Plan is not located adjacent to the Highlands subdivision. It is located approximately 1.5 miles to the west of the subdivision. Also, see Responses 2.17 and 4.14 regarding impact issues with the proposed campground development.
- 32.1 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic issues.
- 32.2 Please see Response 6.20 regarding the overall planning process that has taken place to date.
- 32.3 The proposed entrance to the park is approximately 1.5 miles west of the Highlands subdivision.
- 32.4 Please see Responses 2.17 and 4.14 regarding issues about the park and campground development.
- 32.5 Please see Responses 2.17 and 4.14 regarding issues about fire.

Response to Letter 33 submitted via email by Anne Greenwood

- 33.0 The Department strongly supports the recreation provided by the Nordic Ski Center and enjoys a good working relationship with them. The Preliminary Plan does not propose any curtailment of their activities. In fact, the plan proposes more warming huts and the possibility of over night cabin stays.
- 33.1 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic issues.
- 33.2 The proposed development in the Preliminary Plan will not close any trails and roads currently in use in the park. Access will remain as it is today. In the future, some roads and trails may be closed if they represent a threat to resources through excessive erosion etc. Also, see Response 6.18 for additional information on how the proposed development will be compatible with existing park resources.

Response to Letter 34 submitted via email by John Hearst

- 34.0 The Preliminary Plan proposes to investigate the construction of a campground ranging in size from 25 to 200 sites, not a set 170 site campground.
- 34.1 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic issues.
- 34.2 The Department recommends you contact Caltrans regarding a by-pass road around Tahoe City.

Response to Letter 35 submitted via email by Ray Garland

35.0 Please see Response 6.20 regarding earlier versions of the Preliminary Plan and Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic issues.

Response to Letter 36 submitted via email by Hugo Kenyon

- 36.0 Please see Response 6.20 regarding earlier versions of the Preliminary Plan
- 36.1 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 5.13, 7.13, and 9.11 regarding traffic issues. Also, the proposed entrance road to the park is no longer at Dollar Hill; it is near the Tamarack Lodge, about 1.5 miles west of Dollar Hill.
- 36.2 The proposed administrative buildings shown on the Dollar Property maps will be removed in the Final Plan.
- 36.3 We believe a substantial portion of the business transacted in summer in Tahoma at the market, restaurants and launder mat comes from campers at Sugar Pine Point State Park. Businesses in Tahoe City may be able to branch out and take advantage of concession opportunities in the park. Burton Creek State Park visitors will no doubt conduct a portion of their shopping in Tahoe City. Development of the park has the potential to benefit business in Tahoe City.

Response to Letter 37 submitted via email by Joann Russell

- 37.0 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic impacts and issues. Also, the original concept advanced in the Preliminary Plan was to work with Caltrans to improve the LOS from an F to a D. Caltrans corrected the Department in this assertion in their comment letter to the Preliminary Plan. The current LOS is an E, with the future projected LOS being an F for SR 28. Therefore, we have changed our position based on the new information. Our current position is to implement all reasonable and feasible measures to mitigate or reduce impacts to traffic.
- 37.1 Thank you for the information. The percentage of year round, second home owners, renters, or visitors living in the Highlands does not influence or change any of the proposals in the Preliminary Plan.
- 37.2 The statement regarding thresholds and traffic apply to the trailhead day use facilities where people may park and then travel by bike to surrounding destinations. The campground is not a day use facility. The Preliminary Plan proposes to explore development of a range of campground sizes from 25 to 200 sites, to see how the campground may affect traffic incrementally. In that way, the Department will be able to recommend an appropriate campground size that maximizes the opportunities for overnight camping while addressing the impacts to traffic.
- 37.3 There are many locations in the park that offer views of Lake Tahoe, Mt. Watson and other mountains in the area.
- 37.4 The proposed location for the access road into the park is at Tamarack Road. We sincerely hope to complete this planning process for BCSP within a year from now.

Response to Letter 38 submitted via email by Emily Headley

- 38.0 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic. Also, see Response 37.2 regarding the size of the campground that will be explored for development.
- 38.1 Please see Response 6.18 regarding how the proposed facility development will still allow for many forms of passive recreation.

Response to Letter 39 submitted via email by Mike Hawkins

- 39.0 Please see Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic issues.
- 39.1 There are many water front access locations (beaches) open to the public close by Burton Creek State Park. These include Star Harbor, Bristlecone Parcel, Skylandia Beach, Klausen property, Commons Beach, Canelian Bay Beach, Tahoe Vista Beaches, the Dunes, and Kings Beach. All of these public beaches are close to BCSP.
- 39.2 The Department shares a different opinion of BCSP than the commenter. We do not believe it will be an overflow facility to the other state parks. First, some people prefer the north side of the lake. Also, no other state park in the Tahoe Basin offers nearly as much hiking and biking opportunity as Burton Creek State Park, particularly for beginner and intermediate hikers and bikers. It has more miles of moderate trails than any other park in the Lake Tahoe area. We believe Burton Creek State Park will become a premier destination for hikers and bikers.

Response to Letter 40 submitted via email by Tom Carter and Carol Mazerall

- 40.0 The proposed development of Burton Creek State Park should greatly curtail illegal motorcycle activity in the park because ranger staff will have a round-the-clock presence similar to Sugar Pine Point State Park where no illegal motorized activities take place in the park. Part of the proposal for park development includes additional staff to properly manage the park's resources and enforce its regulations. The only roads open to motorized vehicles in the park would be the access road to the campground and any roads leading to the trailheads. Only non-motorized vehicles are allowed on trails and dirt roads in Burton Creek State Park. The only exception is official State Park vehicles.
- 40.1 The proposed development will comply with all current regulations for Goshawk protection.

Response to Letter 41 submitted via email by Benita Luke

- 41.0 Please see Response 2.17 and 4.14 regarding impacts from the proposed development and Responses 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 5.11, 5.13, 6.10, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic issues. Also, the proposed campground is approximately 1.5 miles from the Highlands residential area.

Response to Letter 42 submitted via email by Roger Huff

- 42.0 Thank you for the recommendation. We believe stating the mission of California State Parks in the Plan Section of the document is adequate.
- 42.1 See Response 6.20 regarding the planning process for the general plan. Also, a brief history is provided on page 13, first paragraph.
- 42.2 We concur. The first page of the Executive Summary, paragraph 3 will be changed as follows:

The property is partially surrounded by undeveloped U.S. Forest Service land with connecting roads and trails and serves as part of an unobstructed habitat corridor to within a few hundred yards of the shoreline of Lake Tahoe. The rest of the property is bordered by residential and commercial properties.

- 42.3 Future facility development is defined on the next page, page 7, fourth paragraph, and in other places throughout the document.
- 42.4 We concur. The first paragraph on page 7 will be changed as follows:

A plan will also describe and address the immediate need to develop day use and access facilities, and to implement a Road and Trail Plan for the park. These facilities are needed because the park is currently not readily accessible to the general public, and is not developed to accommodate the visiting public with basic amenities such as signs, directional panels, restrooms and refuse containers. The Road and Trail Plan is needed to address current resource and recreation issues related to road and trail use in the park. Several roads and trails in the park are experiencing erosion.

- 42.5 The CTC Dollar Property is a logical extension of BCSP and should be integrated with the current park. Due to similar resources and recreational activities the land can be more efficiently managed by one agency rather than two. Also, the CTC and the Department agree in concept on the transfer and do not view it as controversial.
- 42.6 There is currently no reference to unavoidable significant effects in the Executive Summary of the Preliminary Plan.
- 42.7 See Response 42.6 regarding the word unavoidable.
- 42.8 See Response 42.6 regarding the word unavoidable.
- 42.9 See Response 42.6 regarding this reference.

- 42.10 See Response 42.6 regarding this reference.
- 42.11 There is no such term, sentence or section in the Executive Summary of the current Preliminary Plan (June 15, 2005).
- 42.12 See Response 42.11 regarding Aesthetic Resources.
- 42.13 See Response 42.11 regarding Biological Resources.
- 42.14 See Response 42.11 regarding Biological Resources.
- 42.15 See Response 42.11 regarding Biological Resources.
- 42.16 See Response 42.11 regarding Cultural Resources
- 42.17 See Response 42.11 regarding Water Quality Resources
- 42.18 See Response 42.5 regarding Existing and Proposed Classification Maps
- 42.19 The preferred alternative refers to the preference of the Department. The Department is charged with managing the land for all the people of California and the preferred alternative represents what the Department believes is the best use of BCSP for potential visitors. Also, see Response 42.5. The Objectives section will be deleted on the maps in the final plan.
- 42.20 See Response 42.5 regarding maps.
- 42.21 See Responses 42.5, 42.19 and 42.20 regarding maps.
- 42.22 See Response 42.21 regarding maps.

Response to Letter 43 submitted in person by Richard Van Fossen

- 42.0 The term "outdoor recreation opportunities" includes overnight camping. BCSP is classified as a State Park. This classification allows for facilities such as campgrounds.
- 43.1 The term "nothing special" is not used in referenced paragraph. The term typical is used to characterize the west side conifer forest type found in the park.
- 43.2 The Department is proud of the progress it has made in the park actively removing dead and dying trees and completing forest health projects. More acres have been treated in BCSP than any other park in the Tahoe Basin.
- 43.3 Regarding surrounding properties, the paragraph has been changed. Please see Response 42.2.
- 43.4 The Preliminary Plan shows alternative facility locations on the CTC property. Assuming the preferred facility locations are utilized, the proposed alternate facility locations will be dropped in the final plan.
- 43.5 Please see responses 4.14 regarding issues about campground development and Responses 5.13, 7.13, and 9.11 regarding traffic issues.
- 43.6 Please see Response 17.0 regarding the Level of Service goals.
- 43.7 The proposed location for the campground is in a flat area, on high capability land, away from all water courses and meadows, the shortest distance to the highway, and actually would have a view of the lake on its southern edge. We believe it is the best proposed location for a campground in the park.
- 43.8 The road you refer to already exists but will be realigned, widened and paved to decrease erosion and accommodate vehicles. The campground would be built in a area of low diversity. No special interest species are known to exist there. Less than 10 percent of the 2000 acre park would be developed leaving more than adequate space for species protection and management. Additional site specific surveys would be conducted for special interest species prior to development as part of the required environmental document process. Any special interest species found will be protected in accordance with all existing laws and regulations.
- 43.9 We concur there are environmental impacts taking place in the park due to current use. Implementation of the proposed plan will bring additional funds and staffing to the park to help address these impacts. Development of the proposed Road and Trail Plan will lead to a general

decrease in the number of roads and trails in the park which will benefit species that are challenged in crossing them. The remaining roads and trails will be improved to decrease erosion and enhance the riding experience. Accurate use counts of roads and trails would take place as part of the Road and Trail Plan development.

Please see Response 4.14 regarding impacts of campground development.

43.10 The reference to local residents will be deleted. The trails were not properly designed, engineered or constructed to manage the current use. The trails were established with no consideration given to basic trail construction guidelines for topography, stability, erosion etc.

43.11 We concur. The text on page 11, paragraph 3 has been changed as follows:

The Dollar Parcel was acquired by the California Tahoe Conservancy in 1990. The purposes of the acquisition were to protect the property's natural and cultural resources, and make the land available to the public. ~~consistent with the park designation.~~ Also, see Response 43.4.

43.12 Comment noted. Recent orienteering events going off trail have been denied permits by the Department.

43.13 Paragraph 2 on page 13 supports your observation. Also, see Response 43.4 regarding permitted facilities on the CTC property.

43.14 See Response 37.1 regarding home ownership in the Highlands.

43.15 The Ward Unit is only 173 acres, a large percentage of which is designated as riparian or wetlands. The proposed development for BCSP will cover about 200 acres.

43.16 Settling ponds are often required by the agencies you mention for development projects. The Dollar Reservoir, located above the Highlands subdivision was not originally built for the purpose of capturing sediment from a development. We agree that the area provides habitat for aquatic and riparian species. The area would be afforded additional protection under the Preliminary Plan because it would be proposed for preserve status after it is transferred to the Department.

43.17 Additional site specific surveys would be conducted for special interest species prior to any proposed development as part of the required environmental document process. Any special interest species found will be protected in accordance with all existing laws and regulations. Any data or survey information the commenter has regarding resources in the

park should be forwarded to the Senior Ecologist for the Sierra District for validation.

- 43.18 In its present management of the park the Department is in compliance with current laws and regulations pertaining to special status species in its management in BCSP. We annually conduct surveys for the species according to established protocols. We do not allow permitted events to occur during nesting season if proposed near the nests. Also see Response 43.17
- 43.19 These comments will be forwarded to the Sierra District's Maintenance Chief.
- 43.20 Thank you for your observations regarding use. See Response 43.9 regarding accurate numbers. We appreciate the submission of any data to the Sierra District which we will try to validate.
- 43.21 Comment noted. The Department will comply with all TRPA regulations for any proposed development.
- 43.22 Please see Response 17.0 regarding the Level of Service Caltrans goals.
- 43.23 Comment noted. We will design and construct a campground that protects much of the natural resources. Please visit Sugar Pine Point Campground to see a campground that is well integrated into the forest setting.
- 43.24 Comment noted.
- 43.25 Please see Responses 5.13, 7.13, and 9.11 regarding traffic issues. The proposed campground location was chosen because it is high capability ground, level terrain, is far from meadows and riparian areas, and does not impact any local subdivisions.
- 43.26 Thank you for pointing out the document failed to define DOM. DOM refers to the Department Operations Manual which includes a Natural Resources Section. The manual is first mentioned on page 29, Planning influences but is not defined by the acronym DOM. The paragraph will be changed to read as follows in the final plan:

Planning for state parks often deals with issues that extend beyond park and regional boundaries. Often, federal, county, or other state agencies are responsible for providing oversight for various planning related policies and laws such as the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Clean Water Act, Section 404, and Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Additionally, numerous Department resource management policies found in the

Department's Operation Manual ([DOM](#)) help guide the planning processes.

You may review or obtain a copy of the DOM by contacting the Sierra District Office at Sugar Pine Point State Park.

Some special interest species such as the Northern Goshawk do exist on the CTC Dollar Property. Also, see Response 43.17. Portions of the CTC property around Dollar Creek may eventually be recommended for preserve status.

- 43.27 The Department does not have the authority to adjust threshold indicators. That authority belongs to TRPA. The 8 foot road mentioned by the commenter was moved because it was in the meadow destroying meadow habitat. It was moved onto less sensitive forest habitat.
- 43.28 We concur - The Preliminary Plan states your recommendation. See Bullet one under Animal Life Management on page 41 of the Preliminary General Plan.
- 43.29 We concur. When the proposed development is designed we will attempt to limit hardened surfaces and locate housing and facilities near the main road.
- 43.30 The Department will work with the Tahoe City Public Utility District in securing water and sewage disposal facilities for the proposed development (that could be 25-200 camp sites) that meet all current state and federal regulations.
- 43.31 When a specific development plan and proposal is made, the Department will conduct an analysis, utilizing existing Resource Inventory data and new survey data, to determine the impacts the proposed development will have on the natural and cultural resources. This will occur for any type of development project described in the Preliminary Plan.
- 43.32 We concur. The choice of the word "evaluated" is misleading. The second paragraph on page 50 of the Preliminary General Plan has been changed to read as follows:

Establishing land-based carrying capacities, quantified in terms of visitor attendance levels, will be addressed through inventorying and monitoring in subsequent management planning efforts. When site-specific proposals for land uses or facilities are to be prepared, various resource maps of the proposed project location will be checked for resource constraints and sensitivities during the project's preliminary planning phases. Site-specific investigations may also be necessary. Regional

coverage requirements and TRPA threshold standards will be evaluated.
Any proposed development will comply with all TRPA regulations.

- 43.33 Please see Response 43.27 regarding trail construction techniques.
- 43.34 The Preliminary Plan addresses the potential impacts from the facility development on the resource base in the Plan Section and in the Draft EIR. Also, see Responses 43.9 and 43.31 regarding future development and studies needed.
- 43.35 The Preliminary Plan proposes to analyze a campground ranging in size from 25-200 sites. The Department will analyze the possibilities of constructing a small (25 site) traditional car campground, and incrementally investigate the impacts of building a larger and larger facility until the maximum 200 site facility is analyzed.
- 43.36 The alternate road and facilities shown on the maps for the CTC property will be removed in the Final Plan. A portion of the Dollar property surrounding Dollar Creek may be considered for preserve status when the Department acquires the property. Also see Response 43.4 regarding defined uses of the CTC property.
- 43.37 Please see Response 43.36 regarding preserve status for the CTC parcel.
- 43.38 Thank you for pointing out an unclear sentence. The third paragraph on page 64 of the Preliminary General Plan has been changed to read as follows:
- The level of detail addressed in the Environmental Analysis section is comparable to the level of detail provided in the land use proposals of the Plan. What is critical, and what is set forth in the Plan, is the formulation and eventual adoption of a set of policies designed to minimize and mitigate impacts.~~them from further implementation projects.~~
- 43.39 A building and facility management plan is not required by any current regulation or law prior to construction of such facilities. When specific actions discussed in the Preliminary Plan are ready for implementation, the level of CEQA analysis will be determined.

Also, thank you for pointing out the lack of definition for the acronym CSP. It means California State Parks, also referred to as the California Department of Parks and Recreation throughout the document. In these responses we refer to it as the Department. The sentence where CSP first appears in the paragraph on page 66 will be changed to read as follows:

Prior to taking any further action, [California State Parks \(CSP\)](#) must evaluate whether that action constitutes a “project” under CEQA, whether it is categorically exempt (for example routine operational), whether it may have a significant impact on the environment and if so, whether a negative declaration or an EIR needs to be prepared.

- 43.40 The mission of the Department, paraphrased, is to protect resources and provide recreation. The Preliminary Plan strikes that balance. Also, see Response 43.17 regarding protected species and surveys, Response 4.14 regarding general impacts and campground development, and Response 43.31 regarding future development and the analysis process.
- 43.41 Please see Response 43.31 regarding future development and the analysis process.
- 43.42 State Parks does not pay into transient occupancy tax (TOT).
- 43.43 Please see Response 43.30 regarding water supplies for the proposed facility development.
- 43.44 Impact analysis of broken holding tanks on RVs is beyond the scope of a general plan. Such analysis would be more appropriate for the environmental documents and analysis that will be required before any specific facility development proposal is implemented.
- 43.45 Comment noted. When installing fencing to protect resources we will endeavor to use materials appropriate to the site that blend in with the surroundings. Also, please see the Park Wide Goals and Guidelines for Aesthetics in the Preliminary Plan.
- 43.46 Please see Responses 5.13, 7.13, 9.11, and 17.0 regarding traffic issues.
- 43.47 Growth inducing impacts generally refers to permanent changes in economic, population, or housing growth.
- 43.48 It would be helpful if the commenter has substantive evidence to the opinion provided regarding the carrying capacity and the elimination of species, to receive copies of the information for analysis and comment.
- 43.49 A No Project Alternative can be the identified preferred alternative in a general plan. A trailhead can be developed without a campground. Your comment is noted.
- 43.50 Comment noted.

- 43.51 Comment noted. Implementation of the Park Wide Goals and Guidelines along with specific mitigation measures for specific facility development projects will mitigate impacts below a significant level.
- 43.52 Comment noted. Also, we recommend the commenter contact TRPA regarding the threshold standards and revisions.
- 43.53 It is within the regulatory authority of the Department to prohibit campfires in a State Park should it be necessary to comply with current regulations and laws. Specific analysis of air quality impacts from campfires and other sources would be more appropriately conducted as part of the environmental analysis required before any specific facility development proposal is implemented.
- 43.54 The Department has a rigorous Tree Safety Inspection Program that is implemented in all developed visitor use facilities. See Response 4.14 regarding fire dangers and the proposed facility development. Specific analysis of Hanta virus and bubonic plague would be more appropriately conducted as part of the environmental analysis required before any specific facility development proposal is implemented.
- 43.55 Comment noted. Specific analysis of utility infrastructure would be more appropriately conducted as part of the environmental analysis required before any specific facility development proposal is implemented.

Responses to Comments noted at the Public Meeting held July 7th, 2005 at the North Tahoe High School

- 1 See Response 3.12 regarding a parking lot across from TSRA
- 2 See Response 2.16 regarding the proposed preserve boundary adjustment.
- 3 The proposed alternative administrative site will be removed from the maps.
- 4 No other preserves are proposed for BCSP. However, when the CTC Parcel is transferred to the Department, it is likely a natural preserve sub-classification will be recommended for the Dollar Creek corridor.
- 5 The Preliminary Plan strikes a fair balance between improvements to the environment and development particularly in light of the fact less than 10 percent of the 2000 acres would be developed.
- 6 Accessing the park through the Fiberboard Freeway would require going through a neighborhood. The currently proposed access route does not disturb any neighborhood.
- 7 We concur the Statement of Overriding Considerations should be defined. The last paragraph on page 9 where the Statement of Overriding Considerations is mentioned has been changed to read as follows:

The EIR is being prepared to provide full public disclosure of the Department's proposed actions. The Department's purposes in moving forward with the BCSP General Plan are the protection of natural and cultural features balanced with the development of recreation facilities. The activities proposed herein generally do not pose long-term significant impacts on the environment. However, implementation of elements of the General Plan may cause an increase in traffic in an area already congested with tourist traffic. Therefore a Statement of Overriding Considerations ~~will need~~ is recommended to be adopted for this impact.

A Statement of Overriding Considerations is a written statement made by the decision-making body when it approves an environmentally damaging project. In making the decision to approve or deny a project, the decision makers must balance the benefits of the project against unavoidable environmental impacts. The Statement of Overriding Considerations is generally an explanation of this balancing. Specifically, it must explain why the benefits of the project outweigh the unavoidable significant environmental impacts. This Statement will be prepared as part of the Notice of Determination, for signature by the Director of the California Department of Parks and Recreation and approval by the Park and Recreation Commission as part of the adoption of this General Plan.

- 8 Please see Response 17.0 regarding the Level D and the Level of Service goals.
- 9 Please see Response 43.26 regarding DOM - the Department Operations Manual. Please see Response 43.31 regarding species lists, and Response 43.32 regarding Carrying Capacity.
- 10 Please see Response 43.30 regarding where the water will come from.
- 11 If the Recreation Center is constructed on or near the Firestone property the Department would work with pertinent agencies to build a trailhead facility adjacent to the center.
- 12 The Department is not aware of a detailed proposal for a bypass road around Tahoe City that is ready for implementation by any agency.
- 13 Thank you for the observation. We have reviewed the text in the Executive Summary with the Preliminary Plan for contradictions.
- 14 Most all facilities in the park would be closed during the winter with the exception of the existing cross country ski facilities. If a trailhead facility were constructed across from the TSRA campground, it may remain open during the winter.
- 15 Please see Response 42.5 regarding the CTC property.
- 16 Please see Response 37.1 regarding second homeowners.
- 17 The Preliminary Plan does not state that a campground will improve traffic. Also, see Responses 5.13, 7.13, and 9.11 regarding traffic issues.
- 18 We concur. Management of the Nordic facility already must deal with casual users getting on the groomed trails.
- 19 We concur. Some roads may be classified as cultural resources. In those cases specialists will be consulted to determine the best measures to take to protect the resource.
- 20 We concur. We will consider the lower flat for a campground.
- 21 Please see Response 4.14 regarding campground development and fire issues.
- 22 The alternative campground and road locations were put on the maps for planning analysis. At this time, they are expected to be removed from the plan maps in the final plan.

- 23 A general plan is adopted by the State Park and Recreation Commission. It becomes the overall guiding document for a park in terms of management direction and facility development. It provides long term assurances to the public of expected development over the next twenty to thirty years. If a decision is made to deviate from the plan, it would require a public process and development of a general plan amendment similar to the development of a general plan.
- 24 The Department challenged the water rights on Burton Creek in the 1990s. The outcome was a decision by the State Water Resources Control Board that the company that owns the golf course has a legitimate water right to extract water from Burton Creek.
- 25 A natural preserve classification is based on unique and sensitive natural resources. The majority of the Dollar property does not fit that definition. However, every water course in the Tahoe Basin may be considered a sensitive resource. Consequently, if the Department acquires the Dollar property from the CTC, it may recommend the Dollar Creek corridor be classified as a natural preserve by the State Park and Recreation Commission.
- 26 The Park and Recreation Commission is currently scheduled to meet in November of 2005 in the Lake Tahoe area to review and adopt the Preliminary Plan.

Response to the Petition Anonymously Submitted during the Public Comment Period

- P1 Please see Response 2.17 regarding the proposed development in the plan and associated impacts. Also, the "current unimproved state" of Burton Creek State Park makes it unavailable to most visitors to the area. The park is not signed so many visitors to the area do not know it is there. The Department does not have any developed access points so it is inaccessible to most people. As described in Response 2.17, leaving the park in its current condition will not improve the degraded conditions present on some of the roads and trails. Leaving the park as it is would not provide additional recreation opportunities for the public such as camping. It would not provide an affordable alternative to the current expensive overnight lodging. Also, see Response 4.14 for additional information regarding the proposed facility development and impact analysis.
- P2 The Department could expand camping at other state parks in the Tahoe basin rather than develop BCSP. However, the proposed development of Burton Creek State Park in the Preliminary Plan will provide much more to the people of California than simply expanding the campgrounds in the other parks on the west side of the basin. The proposed development will provide camping on the north shore of Lake Tahoe where few camping opportunities are located. It will make accessible the largest area of intermediate hiking and biking trails in the state parks in the basin. It will make available to the people of California a 2,000 acre park currently unknown to most.

RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE GENERAL PLAN

This chapter contains recommended changes and modifications to the Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR for Burton Creek State Park, made subsequent to its public release and the public review process. All changes are a result of responses to comments detailed in Chapter 3 and Department recommended editorial changes.

Page 6, Executive Summary, the 3rd paragraph will be revised to read:

The property is partially surrounded by undeveloped U.S. Forest Service land with connecting roads and trails and serves as part of an unobstructed habitat corridor to within a few hundred yards of the shoreline of Lake Tahoe. The rest of the property is bordered by residential and commercial properties.

Page 7, Executive Summary, the 1st paragraph will be revised to read:

foundation for possible future facility development in the park. A plan will also describe and address the immediate need to develop day use and access facilities, and to implement a Road and Trail Plan for the park. These facilities are needed because the park is currently not readily accessible to the general public, and is not developed to accommodate the visiting public with basic amenities such as signs, directional panels, restrooms and refuge containers. The Road and Trail Plan is needed to address current resource and recreation issues related to road and trail use in the park. Several roads and trails in the park are experiencing erosion.

Page 7, Executive Summary, 4th paragraph, a sentence will be added to the end of it to read:

The trailhead proposed across from the Tahoe State Recreation Area (TSRA) will require a boundary adjustment to Burton Creek State Park, as the property is currently part of the TSRA.

Page 7, Executive Summary, paragraph 5, 1st sentence, the word draft has been deleted.

Page 7, Executive Summary, paragraph 6, will be revised to read:

To better accommodate local traffic and environmental conditions the proposed campground is for ~~425~~-200 sites, plus a 50 person group site, instead of a much larger facility.

Page 7, Executive Summary, last paragraph, will be revised to read:

Second, the proposed campground development will take into consideration traffic on Highway 28, by referencing the Caltrans traffic index of Levels of

Service (LOS) for Tahoe City. The index, that rates traffic flow on a scale of A-F, currently rates Tahoe City traffic ~~at near~~ the bottom of the scale as an ~~F~~ E, due to ~~extreme~~ traffic congestion at times. Caltrans, ~~through traffic and road planning efforts now underway, has a goal to improve the traffic index to Level D, has determined that due to regulatory restrictions defined by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA), they are unable to implement potential measures to improve the index and that it will eventually be downgraded to an F, representing only minor delays in traffic flow.~~ The Department's intent is to plan for campground facilities that will still allow Caltrans to meet this goal is committed to work with Caltrans, TRPA and other agencies to implement reasonable and feasible mitigation for the proposed development in this plan to lessen impacts to traffic as much as possible.

Page 9, Executive Summary, last paragraph, will be revised to read:

The EIR is being prepared to provide full public disclosure of the Department's proposed actions. The Department's purposes in moving forward with the BCSP General Plan are the protection of natural and cultural features balanced with the development of recreation facilities. The activities proposed herein generally do not pose long-term significant impacts on the environment. However, implementation of elements of the General Plan may cause an increase in traffic in an area already congested with tourist traffic. Therefore a Statement of Overriding Considerations ~~will~~ is recommended ~~need~~ to be adopted for this impact. A Statement of Overriding Considerations is a written statement made by the decision-making body when it approves an environmentally damaging project. In making the decision to approve or deny a project, the decision makers must balance the benefits of the project against unavoidable environmental impacts. The Statement of Overriding Considerations is generally an explanation of this balancing. Specifically, it must explain why the benefits of the project outweigh the unavoidable significant environmental impacts. This Statement will be prepared as part of the Notice of Determination, for signature by the Director of the California Department of Parks and Recreation and approval by the Park and Recreation Commission as part of the adoption of this General Plan.

Page 10, Introduction, 2nd paragraph, 5th sentence, will be deleted:

~~Local residents created most of the existing trails.~~

Page 11, Purpose Acquired, 2nd paragraph, will be revised to read:

The Dollar Parcel was acquired by the California Tahoe Conservancy in 1990. The purposes of the acquisition were to protect the property's natural and cultural resources, and make the land available to the public. ~~-consistent with the park designation-~~

Page 13, Purpose of General Plans, 2nd paragraph, 1st sentence, will be revised to read:

Today, the primary reasons for the Department to complete a general plan for Burton Creek State Park are; to lay the foundation for possible future campground development, describe and address the immediate need to develop day use and access facilities; implement planned interpretive programming, and to implement a Road and Trail Plan for the park.

Page 24, Cultural Resources Overview, 2nd paragraph, will be revised to read:

This plan ~~is was currently being~~ presented to the appropriate Native American representatives for comment and consultation as required by the Department's Native American Consultation Policy and Senate Bill 18, Chapter 905, Statutes of 2004. ~~The results of that consultation will be included in the Final General Plan. The Washoe Tribe submitted a comment letter. The comment letter and Department response is included in the Comments and Responses Section of this document.~~

Page 28 - 29, Constraints on Facility Development, beginning with the 4th paragraph, will be revised to read:

Another impact on facility development in BCSP, is ~~the ongoing problem of~~ traffic congestion in Tahoe City and in the Lake Tahoe area in general. During most of July and August, holidays, and winter weekends, traffic backs up on Highways 28 and 89 leading into Tahoe City. Delays can range from minutes to an hour, with the back up sometimes measured in miles.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) ~~has an established system~~ utilizes a system ~~of~~ describing traffic quantities on two-lane highways. Called "Levels of Service for Two-Lane Highways", the system rates highway traffic ~~on an alphanumeric system~~ based on quantity of traffic and speed limit (see below). The levels of service volumes are taken during peak hours.

Traffic on Two-Lane Highways: Level of Service Definitions

LOS A – Free Flowing Conditions.

LOS B – Speeds at or near free-flow speed, but presence of other users begins to be noticeable.

LOS C – Speeds at or near free-flow speed, but freedom to maneuver is noticeably restricted.

LOS D – Conditions where speeds begin to decline slightly with increasing flow;

LOS E – Operating conditions at or near roadway capacity. Even minor Freedom to maneuver more restricted. disruptions to the traffic stream can cause delay.

LOS F – Breakdown in vehicle flow. Queues form quickly behind point in the roadway where the arrival flow rate temporarily exceeds the departure rate.

Highway traffic around Tahoe City is currently ranked as an ~~F— heavily congested traffic E~~ by Caltrans - Operating conditions at or near roadway capacity. Demand exceeds capacity and speeds vary greatly—considerable delays. The Caltrans projects the future LOS for Highway 28 in the Tahoe City area to downgrade to an F. (Draft State Route 28 Transportation Concept Report). The report goes on to state:

"The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) is the responsible agency within the Tahoe Basin for transportation issues, and takes the lead role in identifying transportation strategies and projects. As a result, in order to preserve the unique character of the Basin, typically, TRPA does not pursue additional roadway capacity. Since Caltrans is not the responsible agency for programming capacity increasing projects in the Basin, they cannot guarantee that the overall facility will operate at any level of service better than LOS F. Therefore, the future concept for SR 28 will remain LOS F".~~goal for highway traffic around Tahoe City is to achieve a ranking of D. This would allow for a speed of about 40 miles per hour (except right in town), with some traffic flow becoming unstable. Speeds are subject to sudden change and passing is difficult.~~

~~In order to meet this goal, Tahoe City traffic issues are currently being addressed through a new taskforce headed by Caltrans. Several alternatives to alleviate or lessen the traffic are being explored including construction of another bridge across the Truckee River, and bypasses around the town. Implementation is planned in the next five years.~~

Many of the recreation facilities proposed in this general plan are viewed by local residents as potential negative contributors to the existing traffic flow in Tahoe City. The Department's intent is to plan for facilities that will allow for a Level of Service ranking D or better. work closely with Caltrans and other state, federal and local agencies to implement reasonable and feasible measures to mitigate or reduce significant traffic impacts.

This may be achieved by implementing the improvements developed through the Caltrans Tahoe City traffic working group combined with other mitigations such as retiring of an existing campground in Lake Forest currently managed by the Department of Fish and Game, designing the facilities to encourage walking and biking, and working with other agencies to evaluate opportunities for a trolley service from the campground to nearby points of interest. Also, the size of the proposed campground has been reduced from 300 sites and two large group sites, to a campground of a range of 4 25 - 200 sites, and one group site for 50 people.

~~In order to meet this goal, Tahoe City traffic issues are currently being addressed~~

~~through a new taskforce headed by Caltrans. Several alternatives to alleviate or lessen the traffic are being explored including construction of another bridge across the Truckee River, and bypasses around the town. Implementation is planned in the next five years.~~

~~Many of the recreation facilities proposed in this general plan are viewed as potential contributors to the existing traffic flow in Tahoe City. The Department's intent is to plan for facilities that will allow for a Level of Service ranking D or better.~~

Page 29, Planning Influences, 1st paragraph, last sentence, will be revised to read:

Additionally, numerous Department resource management policies found in the Department's Operation Manual (DOM) help guide the planning processes.

Page 32, Issue Analysis, 5th paragraph, will be revised to read:

Currently, the plan proposes, in the near term, development of day use facilities such as trails and trailhead facilities. In addition, the plan describes a long term vision that includes campground development (4 25 - 200 campsites and one group camp for 50 people), alternative camping such as cabins and yurts, employee housing, and maintenance operational facilities.

Page 32, Issue Analysis, 6th and 7th paragraph, will be revised to read:

~~A primary caveat to campground development will be traffic flows along Highway 28. Development of a campground at Burton Creek State Park will be considered with engineering measures taken in Tahoe City to improve the current traffic level of Service, from a ranking of F to a level of D, as described in the Caltrans Level of Service traffic ranking system. This may be achieved by expanding existing roads, adding new roads, building a bypass around Tahoe City or developing a second bridge down river from Fanny Bridge. The Department's intent is to plan for facilities that will allow for a Level of Service D or better.~~

There are two traffic issues related to the proposed campground development in the Preliminary Plan. One is where the primary access road into the park is located and connects with Highway 28. The other issue is in regards to increased traffic from the proposed facilities and traffic flow.

The original focus of much opposition regarding the access road location was its location near Dollar Hill. The Department listened to the community and moved the proposed access road location from the Dollar Hill area to the currently proposed location at Tamarack Road. The Department will still need to work closely with Caltrans to incorporate properly designed ingress/egress engineered features on Highway 28 where the access road will connect. In order to develop

this access, the current natural preserve boundary will require adjustment. This will require a separate resolution for the Park and Recreation Commission to approve.

In regards to increased traffic and traffic flows California State Parks is committed to work with Caltrans, TRPA and other agencies to implement all feasible and reasonable mitigation measures to reduce the traffic impacts of the proposed development in the Preliminary Plan.

~~The final issue centers on the access route into the park for campground development. Two routes of access have been identified as feasible—a route entering the park near the Tamarack Lodge, and a route located at Dollar Hill. The Department has identified the route near the Tamarack Lodge as the preferred access route into the park~~

Page 46, Fire Management, last paragraph, will be revised to read:

Maintain a fire management program based on vegetation management priorities, scientific fire chronology data, historical information, monitoring data, and other park management goals.

Page 50, Carrying Capacity, 2nd paragraph, will be revised to read:
Establishing land-based carrying capacities, quantified in terms of visitor attendance levels, will be addressed through inventorying and monitoring in subsequent management planning efforts. When site-specific proposals for land uses or facilities are to be prepared, various resource maps of the proposed project location will be checked for resource constraints and sensitivities during the project's preliminary planning phases. Site-specific investigations may also be necessary. Regional coverage requirements and TRPA threshold standards will be evaluated. Any proposed development will comply with all TRPA regulations.

Page 51, Park Wide Goals and Guidelines for Circulation, two bullets will be added under the last Guidelines to read:

- Work with public transit agencies to develop bus stops at appropriate locations for park access.
- The concept of a trolley service will be explored with other local entities to shuttle people from the proposed campground and trailheads to central locations such as Tahoe City.

Page 54, Park- Wide Goals and Guidelines for Recreation, two bullets will be added to read:

- Explore offering youth recreation programs to promote connections between today's young people and the natural/cultural environments.
- Explore alternative camping facilities such as walk-in tent sites, yurts, and tent cabins to provide different camping experiences and as a potential source of new revenue generation.

Page 54, Park-Wide Goals and Guidelines for Interpretation, the entire section will be deleted and replaced to read as follows:

PARK-WIDE GOALS AND GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETATION

Burton Creek State Park features natural, cultural and recreational resources. The park will contribute to the overall effort of land management agencies to provide access for linked recreation in the Tahoe Basin. The park contributes to the broader context of the interpretation of the physical, natural and cultural histories of the region. The park also plays a part in the effort of agencies to provide for continuing improvement of the Tahoe Basin's environmental health with particular focus on the lake's legendary water quality.

Future interpretive planning must look at how and where physical, natural, cultural and recreational stories are told within the basin. The part the park plays in interpreting these stories must be told within the broader context of other agencies, parks, sites and facilities within the basin. Integrating those locations and stories into the park's interpretive planning will provide visitors with a greater connectivity to interpretive and educational facilities and goals around the lake.

Park visitor use patterns and projections must be evaluated in order to plan interpretive facilities and programs that will best serve both management and visitor's needs.

Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes facilitate a personal connection between the visitors' values and the park's resources to provoke enjoyable, positive, meaningful and supportive interactions.

The unifying theme for Burton Creek State Park is: We cause changes to, and are changed by, the natural environment within Burton Creek State park.

Goal

Visitors enjoy and understand the interpretation of Burton Creek State Park's natural resources within the context of the natural history of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Guidelines

- Integrate appropriate curriculum standards into interpretive planning
- Provide interpretive experiences specifically for youth
- Exhibits should have interactive, engaging components
- Integrate environmental education into interpretive planning
- Integrate forest management practices into interpretive planning
- Develop programs and facilities that facilitate visitor understanding of the value in restoring and improving the environmental health of the lake, streams and forests.
- Develop programs and facilities of special interest to park visitors that focus on specific natural resources within the park.

Primary Theme

The landscape of Burton Creek State Park is changed from the way it appeared in the past.

Supporting Themes

We've come a long way, many restoration efforts have been undertaken in Burton Creek State Park.

To restore the damaged environment we must look at both natural and cultural impacts.

The battle for environmental improvement is on-going at Lake Tahoe.

Resource protection and management practices have changed dramatically over the past century.

Goal

Visitors enjoy and understand the interpretation of Burton Creek State Park's cultural resources within the context of the cultural history of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Guidelines

- Integrate appropriate curriculum standards into interpretive planning
- Provide interpretive experiences specifically for youth
- Exhibits should have interactive, engaging components
- Develop programs and facilities that facilitate visitor understanding of the cultural history of Burton Creek State Park and the broader Tahoe Basin context within which the park exists

- Facilitate visitor understanding of the influences of settlement, logging, mining and fishing on the park
- Develop programs and facilities of special interest to park visitors that focus on specific cultural resources within the park.
- Develop appropriate interpretive period

Primary Theme

Human use changed the historic resource landscape.

Supporting Themes

Prehistoric people took only those resources they needed themselves to survive.

With settlement of the surrounding areas and the basin came destructive resource use.

Clear cutting and logging have changed the basin forever.

Early fishing practices nearly destroyed the fishery and changed the lake forever.

Goal

Visitors enjoy and understand the interpretation of Burton Creek State Park's recreational resources within the context of the recreational history of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Guidelines

- Integrate appropriate curriculum standards into interpretive planning
- Provide interpretive experiences specifically for youth
- Exhibits should have interactive, engaging components
- Develop programs and facilities that facilitate visitor understanding of the recreational history of Burton Creek State Park and the broader Tahoe Basin context within which the park exists
- Facilitate visitor understanding of the influences of equestrian use, mountain biking, hiking, camping and day-use on the park
- Direction finding and sense of place information will be key to ensuring a positive visitor experience
- Regulatory information should be part of the interpretive message for target user groups such as equestrian users, mountain bikers, hikers and campers
- Recreational opportunity information will be needed for visitors
- Safety information will help ensure positive outcomes in the park
- Develop programs and facilities of special interest to park visitors that focus on specific recreational resources within the park.

Primary Theme

Recreation changes the modern resource landscape.

Supporting Themes

You can experience more enjoyable recreation in a well managed and restored environment.

We grow by the inch and die by the foot, trails are important for plants, animals and people.

Getting away from the madding crowds, or not, the keys to fun in parks.

Wilderness etiquette is important to everyone here and beyond.

Primary Theme

Recreational opportunities abound here with something for just about everyone.

Supporting Themes

Burton Creek offers something unique for you to see and do.

There are places to go and things to see beyond Burton Creek State Park.

Page 60, Planning Zone 1 Guidelines, delete 6th bullet:

- ~~Separate vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian circulation to the extent possible.~~

Page 61, Planning Zone 1 Guidelines, 1st bullet will be revised to read:

- **Consider development of a campground sized to accommodate approximately 425 - 200 campsites and one group camp area for 50 people.**

Page 64, 3rd paragraph, will be revised to Read:

The level of detail addressed in the Environmental Analysis section is comparable to the level of detail provided in the land use proposals of the Plan. What is critical, and what is set forth in the Plan, is the formulation and eventual adoption of a set of policies designed to minimize and mitigate impacts.~~them from further implementation projects.~~

Page 65, Environmental Analysis, Table 1.1, heading in right hand column will be revised to read:

Location in ~~ABDSP~~ BCSP

Page 66, second paragraph, last sentence, will be revised to read:

The sentence where CSP first appears in the paragraph on page 66 will be changed to read as follows:

Prior to taking any further action, California State Parks (CSP) must evaluate whether that action constitutes a “project” under CEQA, whether it is categorically exempt (for example routine operational), whether it may have a significant impact on the environment and if so, whether a negative declaration or an EIR needs to be prepared.

The General Plan/EIR will also be used as the basis for the State Park and Recreation Commission to make a decision regarding the proposed boundary adjustment to the Burton Creek Natural Preserve.

Page 67, Project Description, 4th paragraph, will be revised to read:

Future facility development would include all the development of an entrance road and campground ranging from 4 25 – 200 campsites, and one group site for 50 people. A small number of yurts or rustic cabins may be constructed within the campground area for summer and/or winter use. Administrative buildings, including maintenance operational buildings and employee residences are planned for construction to support the facility.

Page 67, Project Description, 6th and 7th paragraphs, will be revised to read:

The Department has determined that potentially significant impacts ~~can~~ may be mitigated for all impacts except traffic. Adding traffic of any amount to the Tahoe City area may be considered significant and may not be mitigated.

Potential mitigation measures for all ~~other types of potential~~ -impacts have been discussed. These mitigation measures reflect the specificity of the General Plan and are therefore in the form of guidelines ~~(with the exception of traffic as discussed above)~~. The most appropriate mitigation measures will be developed as specific projects are proposed, design plans are drawn up, and environmental analysis and documents developed.

Page 68, Preferred Alternative, Planning Zone 1, the 5th bullet will be revised to read:

- Plan for development of a campground in this planning zone. The actual size of the campground would be determined through analysis of use data and environmental analysis and constraints. Start the planning process by considering a facility to accommodate 4 25 - 200 campsites, a small number of cabins and yurts, and one group camp area for 50 people . Campground development would take into consideration traffic on Highway 28, with the intent of maintaining the Caltrans goal of Level of Service D implementing feasible and reasonable measures to mitigate impacts of traffic flow and access on Highway 28.

Page 81, Unavoidable Significant Environmental Effects, Traffic, will be revised to read

Unavoidable Significant Environmental Effects

Traffic

Threshold

Caltrans uses the Concept Level of Service (LOS) as the CEQA level of significance threshold when evaluating the impacts of local development plans and projects. A significant impact is identified if a specific local development plan or project results in a level of service on the highway segment or intersection that is below the Concept LOS, and must be mitigated.

Impact

Potentially significant unless mitigated

Discussion

Traffic in the Tahoe City area is congested during daylight hours during the summer and winter weekends. Caltrans currently ranks traffic flow as an ~~F E~~ – Considerable Delays Operating Conditions at or near roadway capacity - on Highway 28, the worst rating in its Level of Service traffic flow rating system. In their Concept Transportation Report for Highway 28 (TCR, 2004) Caltrans has projected the LOS for Tahoe City will be downgraded in the future to a LOS of F - heavily congested traffic - in the future.

The report goes on to state:

"The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) is the responsible agency within the Tahoe Basin for transportation issues, and takes the lead role in identifying transportation strategies and projects. As a result, in order to preserve the unique character of the Basin, typically, TRPA does not pursue additional roadway capacity. Since Caltrans is not the responsible agency for programming capacity increasing projects in the Basin, we cannot guarantee that the overall

facility will operate at any level of service better than LOS F. Therefore, our concept for SR 28 will remain LOS F."

Proposed campground development and day use facilities in the General Plan may contribute to the traffic congestion. ~~It is the intent of the Department to meet the goal of Caltrans to achieve and maintain a traffic flow Level of Service D, with only minor delays in traffic. However, this goal may not be attained.~~

Mitigation

California State Parks is committed to work with Caltrans, TRPA and state and federal agencies to implement all feasible and reasonable mitigation measures to reduce the traffic impacts of the proposed development in the Preliminary Plan.

~~Although some of the expected i~~Increases in traffic from the campground development may be mitigated through various measures such as project design encouraging hike and bike trips to town, developing public transportation options, closing of the Forest Lake Campground (DFG operated), developing a trolley service from the campground to local points of interest, and limiting the size of the new campground. ~~, not all of the additional traffic may be mitigated to a level below significant. The proposed campground size will be analyzed to determine the size of campground that will maximize camping opportunity while addressing traffic impacts.~~

~~The impact~~ That determination for the campground will be made when a traffic analysis is conducted as part of a facility development project specific CEQA document. ~~Therefore, an increase in traffic of a yet undetermined amount, must be considered at this time an unavoidable significant environmental effect.~~

Responsibility: The Department of Parks and Recreation
Staff Planners

Monitoring/Reporting Completion of Traffic Analysis as part of
a project specific CEQA analysis.

Unavoidable Significant Environmental Effects

Evaluation of the specificity of this first tier review indicates that all the ~~other~~ potential effects from projects proposed in this General Plan can be reduced to a less than significant level with appropriate facility location, the implementation of resource management programs, and the development of other specific mitigation measures.

Until the uses, locations, and scope of facilities or management plans are specified, the actual level of impact, whether individual or cumulative, cannot be determined. However, all future plans and projects are required to be in

compliance with local, state, and federal permitting and regulatory requirements and subject to subsequent tier CEQA review and project specific mitigation.

Page 93, References, the following reference will be added:

[California Department of Transportation, Transportation Concept Report, Highway 28, 2004.](#)

Page 94, Acronyms, will be revised to read:

Page 95 - Maps

The maps will be revised to delete extraneous information and the proposed facilities on the Dollar property (except one trailhead)

ACRONYMS

BCSP – Burton Creek State Park

DPR – Department of Parks and Recreation

CNPS – California Native Plant Society

CTC – California Tahoe Conservancy

DFG – Department of Fish and Game

TRPA – Tahoe Regional Planning Agency

USFS – United States Forest Service

USFWS – United States Fish and Wildlife Service

[DOM - Department Operation Manual](#)

[CSP - California State Parks](#)

Page 107, System-Wide Planning Influences, the following will be added:

[California State Parks Trails Policy](#)